

THE ATLAS OF  
**MILITARY**  
HISTORY







THE ATLAS OF  
**MILITARY**  
HISTORY

AN AROUND-THE-WORLD SURVEY OF WARFARE THROUGH THE AGES

**AMANDA LOMAZOFF**

WITH AARON RALBY



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# CONTENTS

Introduction	9
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## PART 1

## AFRICA

The Old Kingdom	14
The Middle Kingdom	15
The New Kingdom	16
The Nubian Kingdom of Kush	17
<i>Feature: Horses and Chariots</i>	18
The Punic Wars	20
Jugurthine War	22
Vandals	23
Berbers and Arabs	24
Almoravid and Almohad	25
Ghana	26
Mali	27
Songhai Empire	28
The Ashanti	29
Aksum	30
Kongo	31
Mutapa	32
Shaka	33
Zulu Wars	34
Boer Wars	35
First Italo-Ethiopian War	36
World War II African Theater	38
Algerian War	40
Civil Wars	41
Rwandan Civil War	42
Protesters Spark Change	44

## PART 2

## EUROPE

Archaic Greece	48
Marathon	49
Salamis	50
Peloponnesian War	51
<i>Feature: Triremes and Longboats</i>	52
Wars of the Republic	54
Rome: Caesar	55
Rome: Trajan	57
<i>Feature: The Legions of Rome</i>	58
Celtic Expansion	60
Celtic Invasion of Greece/Galatia	61

Illyria	62
Scythians and Sarmations	63
Cimbrian War	64
Attila the Hun	65
Sackings of Rome	66
Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms	67
Vikings	68
Great Heathen Army	69
Alfred the Great	70
Cnut the Great	71
Vikings in Ireland and Scotland	72
The Battle of Clontarf	73
Battle of Stiklestad	74
Battle of Hastings	75
<i>Feature: Viking Warships</i>	76
Battle of Poitiers	78
Reconquista	79
Battle of Nicopolis	80
Hussite Wars	81
Charlemagne	82
Edward I's Wars	83
Hundred Years' War	84
Battles of Crecy	85
<i>Feature: The European Castle</i>	86
Wars of the Roses	88
The Spanish Armada	89
Ottoman-Habsburg Wars	90
The Thirty Years' War	91
Russia-Turkey	92
Crimean War	93
Great Northern War	94
War of Spanish Succession	95
Jacobite Risings	96
French Revolution	97
Napoleon	98
Waterloo	99
Königgrätz	100
Franco-Prussian War	101
World War I	102
<i>Feature: Death from Above</i>	106
Russian Revolution	108
Irish War of Independence	109
Spanish Civil War	110
Ethnic Cleansing	111
Europe Returns to War	112
Standing Alone	113
Operation Barbarossa	114



The Allied Invasion of Europe	115
End of the Third Reich	116
<i>Feature: Rockets</i>	118
Kosovo Conflict	120
Dissolution of the USSR	121

PART 3

THE MIDDLE EAST

122

Sumer	124
Sargon of Akkad	125
Babylon	126
Assyria	127
Hurrians and Hittites	128
Battle of Kadesh	129
King David of Israel	130
Israel and Babylon	131
Maccabees and Romans	132
Jewish Revolts	133
Cyrus the Great	134
Darius the Great	135
<i>Feature: The Royal Road</i>	136
Alexander the Great	138
Wars of the Diadochi	140
Seleucids	142
Alexander and His Heirs	143
Roman-Parthian War	144
The Sassanid Empire	146
Islamic Expansion	148
The Roots of Arabic Influence	149
Shia and Sunni	150
Abbasid Dynasty	151
Battle of Manzikert	152
The First Crusade	153
The Muslim World	154
Sack of Baghdad	156
Battle of Ain Jalut	157
Timur	158
<i>Feature: Gunpowder</i>	160
Rise of the Ottomans	162
Sack of Constantinople	163
Suleiman	164
Ottoman-Persian Wars	166
Safavids	168
The Russo-Persian Wars	169
World War I Middle East	170
The Arab-Israeli Wars	172
Iran-Iraq War	174
Iraq War	175

PART 4

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN ASIA

176

Vedic Period	178
The First Indian Empire	179
<i>Feature: War Elephants</i>	180
The Gupta Dynasty	182
Pala Empire	183
The Greco-Bactrian Kingdom	184
The Kushan Empire	185
The Golden Horde	186
The Invasion of Khwarazmia	187
Mogul Empire	188
Mogul Empire: Aurangzeb	189
Maratha Empire	190
The Third Battle of Panipat	191
The Siege of Seringapatam	192
Indian Mutiny	193
The Great Game	194
India-Pakistan Wars	195
Sri Lankan Civil War	197

PART 5

NORTHERN AND EASTERN ASIA

198

Spring and Autumn Period	200
China: Warring States	201
China: Qin	202
Xiongnu and Han	203
War of the Three Kingdoms	204
Tibet and Tang	205
The Tang Dynasty	206
The Battle of Talas	207
Border Control	208
Song Dynasty	209
<i>Feature: War of the Gods</i>	210
The Kievan Rus (Ninth–Thirteenth Centuries)	212
The Novgorod Republic	213
Ivan the Terrible	214
The Conquest of Siberia	
Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century	215
Three Kingdoms	216



Koguryo-China Wars	217
The Rise of Silla	218
Japanese and Manchurian Invasions	219
<i>Feature: Strategic Advantages</i>	220
Samurai	222
Genpei War	223
Mongol Invasions	224
Sengoku Period	225
Battle of Nagashino	227
The Ten Campaigns of Qianlong	228
Opium Wars	230
Boxer Uprising	231
Taiping Rebellion	232
Russo-Japanese War	233
Sino-Japanese Wars	234
Siberian Intervention	235
World War II: Battle of Iwo Jima	236
World War II: The Battle of Okinawa	237
<i>Feature: Nuclear Warfare</i>	238
Chinese Civil War	240
Korean War	241
Afghanistan Civil Wars	242
War in Afghanistan	243

## PART 6

# SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

244

The Medang Kingdom	246
Java Wars: Rise of Singosari	247
The Mataram Sultanate	248
Java War	249
Japanese Invasion of the Dutch East Indies	250
The Battle of the Java Sea	251
<i>Feature: The Oldest Weapon</i>	252
Kamehameha I	254
The Maori	255
Australia: The Black War	256
The Philippines	257
World War II: Pacific Theater	258
World War II: Guadalcanal	259
<i>Feature: The Ages of Technology</i>	260
Han Invasion of Nam Viet	262
Ngo Quyen: Nam Viet Independence	263
Mongol Invasions of Vietnam	264
Ming Invasion and Occupation of Dai Viet	265
Sultanate of Malacca	266
Vietnam-Champa Wars	267

Kingdom of Funan	268
The Kingdom of Pagan	269
The Kingdom of Khmer	270
Mongol Invasion of Burma	271
Sukhothai: Ramkanghaeng	272
The Kingdom of Ayutthaya	273
Toungoo Dynasty	274
Anglo-Burmese Wars	275
Indochina Independence	276
The Vietnam War	277
Myanmar: 1962 Coup, 8888 Uprising	278
South Thailand Insurgency	279

## PART 7

# THE AMERICAS

280

The Olmec	282
The Maya	283
The Inca	284
The Aztecs	285
Prehistoric North America	286
Pequot War	287
French and Indian War	288
Chickamauga War	289
The Great Sioux Nation	290
Red River War, Snake War, Modoc War	291
<i>Feature: Wolves of the Sea</i>	292
American Revolutionary War	294
War of 1812	295
The Haitian Revolution	296
Mexican Independence	297
South American Wars of Independence	298
Texas Revolution	301
Mexican-American War	302
American Civil War	303
Spanish-American War	306
Cuban Revolution	307
War on Drugs	308
War on Terror	309
<i>Feature: Future Conflicts</i>	310
Appendix: Chronology	312
Index	314





310 VI

Mundo Sul.  
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AFRICA

Brosia

Regio Capricorni

Mar Pacificus



# INTRODUCTION

## WARFARE IN HUMAN HISTORY

The great General Robert E. Lee, leader of the Confederate forces in the American Civil War, once commented, “It is well that war is so terrible; we should grow too fond of it.” His victorious Union counterpart, General William T. Sherman, expressed a similar sentiment—far more bluntly—when he declared “War is hell.” Yet, both men believed that they were fighting for righteous causes, thereby highlighting the recurring tragedy of military history: even two-sided engagements are rarely black and white.

Still, few people would profess to be fond of war. No other human endeavor causes so much damage, destruction, and death. Yet, it is equally true that to study history, culture, and, in many cases, religion without taking warfare into account is difficult. The history of military engagement is the study of technology and diplomacy, of religion and philosophy. It explains our political geography and the range of our civilizations. No war can be divorced from its emotional causes and consequences. Military history touches on human psychology and belief—the hidden mechanisms by which we overcome a disinclination to kill and by which we cope with loss, remorse, and hard-won triumph. Military history is, in short, a prism through which to view the history of the world.

Is warfare endemic to the human race, or is it a cultural construct, learned and thus potentially susceptible to eradication? Scholars’ opinions vary. Viewed across the gamut of life on earth, warfare is rare. Besides humans, only ants, wolves, and chimpanzees, have been observed to wage war. Here, warfare is distinguished from single combat (individuals of many species compete for mates), murder (by definition war involves group action), and manslaughter (death caused unintentionally). Wars have, certainly, occurred in every human civilization with a written record, although it is unclear when, exactly, our species first started marching off to them.







**PLUS ÇA CHANGE**

Putting aside philosophical considerations, psychology, and biology, however, the proximate causes of war seem to have changed little over the centuries: grabs for land, national defense, freedom from or imposition of tyranny, religious beliefs, insults, and revenge rank high among them. As early as 3000 BC, the two halves of ancient Egypt joined together, possibly due to the conquering armies of a pharaoh named Narmer. Throughout the ancient world, the arable land surrounding the great rivers became too tempting a prize to resist, as Sumer, Akkadia, and Babylon, among other civilizations, rose and fell along their banks.

Across Eurasia, from France to China, nations of nomadic horsemen raided civilizations to their south, not infrequently conquering them. Attila the Hun and Genghis Khan resonate in our shared historical consciousness even today. Others, like Akbar the Great, forged mighty empires out of fractured polities and disparate religions; several, like Charlemagne in Europe or Oda Nobunaga in Japan, pursued their dreams of unified cultures and nations right to the end. On the other side of the world, empire-builders like Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui or, in Africa, Askia of Songhai marked the world with mighty strides. And the urge for empire continued; the imperial goal dangled in front of every would-be conqueror throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, from Napoleon Bonaparte to Adolf Hitler.

**A GAME FOR NATIONS**

By the twentieth century, many of the world's nations had rejected the idea of empire outright, however, considering self-determination the nobler path. Revolutions from South America to Russia shook off the old. From the conflagration of two world wars arose completely new nations, with new balances of power. More recently, revolutions across the Muslim world, called the Arab Spring, reflect the extent to which the will of the people, rather than the political designs of an empowered aristocracy, now determine the fate of nations. Although typically paired with democratic ideals, popular movements also spawn terrorism, which the world today fears nearly as much as nuclear war. With few exceptions—such as the *chu-c'ah* (capture wars) of the Maya—wars are designed to be lethal to enemy combatants. Yet thanks to medical advances and “surgical strike” technologies, such as drones, combat mortality rates have actually declined in the last century and a half, even though the weaponry for inflicting casualties is now significantly more deadly. On the other hand, the horror of such large-scale terrorist attacks as 9/11 or the specter of nuclear war is, of course, the likelihood that large numbers of noncombatants will die, as well as soldiers.

Yet, the prospect of utter catastrophe resulting from nuclear war itself works to check the impulse to wage it, and if weaponry has become more lethal and armies grown much larger, still the frequency of war has decreased in recent centuries. Political economics has come increasingly to the fore in the establishment and maintenance of peace. Or as Sun-tzu, the fifth-century BC Chinese master wrote in *The Art of War*, “To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.” May we yet dare to hope that future leaders will display such wisdom.





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# 1 AFRICA

Africa, the world's second-largest continent—and likely the place where the human race evolved some seven million years ago—is a land of geographical extremes, from its vast, arid Sahara (the globe's largest desert) to its unbroken savannas and dense rain forests. The history of Africa's peoples is equally varied, the continent spawning great civilizations and some of the largest and most successful empires the world has ever known, as well as smaller settlements of hunter-gatherers who live today much as they have for generations.

The lack of a written record has somewhat stymied study of premodern Africa—with the noted exception of ancient Egypt and some of its neighbors (and enemies). In the modern period, especially during the “Scramble for Africa” during the late nineteenth century, European colonial ambitions were often thwarted by the ferocity and determination of the African nations they were attempting to subdue; numerous “small wars” determined the political map of Africa as we know it today. Ethiopia, alone, successfully resisted European domination through military victories, but nearly every other African country spent decades wrestling with the impact of European invasion.



# THE OLD KINGDOM

One of the world’s most impressive and longest-lasting civilizations, ancient Egypt endured for three thousand years along the banks of the Nile River, whose annual floods provided the water necessary for agriculture and a seasonal rhythm ritualized into Egyptian religion. Egypt’s long history was neither uniformly stable nor culturally monolithic, however; instead, the country grew and contracted with periods of stability and strength alternating with periods of warfare and weakness. Although Egypt was frequently the aggressor in its many wars, it suffered invasion more than once, even experiencing entire dynasties of foreign rulers, and in the end, under the successive conquests of Macedonia, Rome, Egypt, and finally the Muslim Arabs, ancient Egypt was lost to the sands.



*A waterfall on the Blue Nile River in Ethiopia, known in Amharic as Tis Abay, meaning “smoking water.”*



### KINGDOM ON THE NILE

Ancient Egyptian history can be broadly divided into ten periods, alternating periods of relative stability with periods of decline, conquest, or dynastic confusion, called “intermediate” periods. Thanks to hieroglyphic inscriptions, ruins, and other archaeological clues, a great deal can be gleaned about ancient Egypt, though all such evidence is open to interpretation, and, however much is preserved, certainly a great deal more has been lost forever, particularly from the earliest periods.

Exactly how the kingdom formed out of the smaller polities clustered along the Nile, for example, is mostly suppositional. It is unlikely that a single battle or war created Egypt, yet early artwork makes it clear that Egyptians expected their kings to demonstrate martial prowess. One of the most fabulous artifacts of the Predynastic or Early Dynastic periods (3000–2686 BC),

the Narmer Palette, shows an early king of Egypt wielding a mace over a conquered enemy. On this side of the palette, Narmer wears the White Crown of Upper Egypt (the south) while on the other he wears the Red Crown of Lower Egypt (the Delta

region). Narmer may be the very pharaoh who finally united—perhaps by force—these two halves of Egypt.

The Old Kingdom peaked in the Fourth Dynasty (2613–2484 BC), when the pharaohs were strong enough to have the great pyramids and the Sphinx at Giza built, but from then until the end of the Old Kingdom (2181 BC) central authority gradually crumbled as governors of Egypt’s districts (*nomes*) and nobles grew increasingly powerful. Military expeditions into the Sinai, Canaan, and especially Nubia gradually gave way to internal disputes, although information about specific conflicts is hard to come by. Images of pharaohs smiting a representative enemy—whose ethnic identity can often be determined from the style of dress or features—may represent specific battles or wars, or they may be purely symbolic; the smiting motif is very common in ancient Egyptian artwork. In addition to the Nubians and the Canaanites, the other group represented as enemies in Old Kingdom iconography are the Libyans. Although Old Kingdom Egypt never tried to conquer “Libya” (i.e., the Sahara), Old Kingdom Egyptians raided the region with some frequency to collect slaves, gold, and other plunder.

The Old Kingdom descended into chaos thanks to weakening central authority, crop failure, and perhaps a series of failed floods. It was left to the would-be pharaohs following the First Intermediate Period (2181–2055 BC) to reunite the kingdom, again using force—this time against competing dynasties as well as recalcitrant nobles.



Above: *The mummified head of Thutmose III, the 6th Pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty.*  
Left: *Narmer was an Egyptian Pharaoh from the Early Dynastic Period (32nd century BC). He is considered the founder of the First Dynasty. The Narmer Palette bears the insignia of Upper and Lower Egypt, suggesting that Narmer had unified the two Kingdoms during his reign.*



Above: *this map shows the extent of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, approximately 2686–2181BC.*

Timeline of Ancient Egypt									
4000–3100/3000 BC (Dynasty 0)	3000–2686 BC (Dynasties I–II)	2686–2181 BC (Dynasties III–VI)	2181–2055 BC (VII–XI, part I)	2055–1650 BC (Dynasties XI, part II–XIII)	1650–1550 BC (Dynasties XIV–XVII)	1550–1069 BC (Dynasties XVIII–XX)	1069–664 BC (Dynasties XXI–XXV)	664–332 BC (Dynasty XXVI)	332 BC–AD 641
Predynastic Period	Early Dynastic	Old Kingdom	First Intermediate Period	Middle Kingdom	Second Intermediate Period	New Kingdom	Third Intermediate Period	Late Period	Classical and Byzantine Periods



# THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

Pharaoh Mentuhotep II, the fifth pharaoh of the Eleventh Dynasty, finally reunited Egypt by defeating his northern rivals around the thirty-ninth year of his fifty-one-year reign (2055–2004 BC). His reign is thus considered the first of the Middle Kingdom (2055–1650 BC), during which the pharaohs regained control, conquered parts of Nubia and the Levant, and developed a new kind of military. The conquest of Nubia—which reached as far as the Second Cataract of the Nile—required building and maintaining several fortresses, which in turn required a standing army.

For the first time in Egyptian military history, professional soldiers, specializing in specific weapons, appeared. Weapons were still quite primitive, however: bow and arrow predominated, along with slings, clubs, and daggers—very rarely made of bronze, but more often made of flint. Siege weapons and tactics also begin to appear clearly in the preserved evidence.



*The age of the pyramids reached its peak in 2575–2150 BC, in Giza in Egypt. The Great Pyramid of Giza is one of the largest in the world.*



## THE SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

Central authority began to waver with the advent of the Thirteenth Dynasty (1795–1650 BC): during that 145-year span, more than seventy pharaohs reigned, signaling a return to regionalism and likely armed confrontations between some of the contenders. By the end of the Middle Kingdom, Egypt once again split, with the so-called Seventeenth Dynasty ruling from Thebes (Mentuhotep II's old capital) and the Fifteenth and Sixteenth ruling from Avaris. These last two were not in fact Egyptian dynasties at all, but represented the rulers of an Asiatic or Semitic people, who had begun to migrate to the Delta region during the Middle Kingdom.

The Hyksos introduced the composite bow, the *khopesh*—a sickle-shaped bronze (later iron) sword—and the chariot to Egyptian warfare. The extent to which the Hyksos rose to power organically and the extent to which they conquered a chaotic Lower Egypt is debated; the name *Hyksos*, an Egyptian word meaning “rulers of foreign lands,” may suggest the latter, but no concrete evidence one way or the other has yet emerged. In Upper Egypt, the Theban dynasty lost control of Nubia, but under Pharaoh Kamose (1555–50 BC) successfully warred against their northern neighbors, reuniting Egypt once again.



## Egypt's Enemies

Most information about the enemies Egypt faced during its long periods of transcendence and dissolution comes from the Egyptians themselves, rendering the information both vague and suspect. The precise origins of the Hyksos, for example, has been the subject of debate among Egyptologists for decades. Even more frustrating are references to the mysterious “Sea People,” apparently raiders and mercenaries who infested the Eastern Mediterranean in the late Bronze Age. Anatolia, the Levant, and Greece have all been suggested as homelands for the Sea People: most likely, the term was used indiscriminately to describe many different peoples plying the Mediterranean waves.

*Left: This map of Ancient Egypt during the Dynastic period (3150–30 BC) shows the Nile up to the fifth cataract (rapid), from Memphis at the top of the Nile Delta, upstream to Kush and the Nubian Desert. Far left: Ramesses II driving a two-horse chariot, known as a biga, with bows, arrows, and wearing the royal headgear called the lappet.*



# THE NEW KINGDOM

The Second Intermediate Period ended when Kamose, ruling from Thebes, began a double-fronted war against both the Hyksos in the north and the Nubians of Kush in the south, who had taken advantage of Egypt's weakness to take back all the territory as far as the First Cataract that the pharaohs of the Middle Kingdom had conquered. The first pharaoh of the New Kingdom (Dynasty XVIII), Ahmose, was Kamose's son or possibly his brother, and he finished what Kamose had started. Not only did Ahmose destroy their capital of Avaris and drive the Hyksos from Egypt, he also chased them into Palestine, where his campaigns against them marked the beginning of centuries of Egyptian attempts to subjugate the Levant.



## THE CONQUERING PHARAOH

Ancient Egypt rose to the height of its glory during the New Kingdom (1550–1069 BC), when some of its strongest pharaohs ruled Egypt and conquered lands far beyond its borders. One of the most remarkable of these was Thutmose III, sixth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Called the Napoleon of Egypt (a phrase sometimes attributed to the famous American Egyptologist James Henry Breasted), Thutmose III conducted seventeen campaigns in Canaan and Syria alone during his thirty-two-year sole reign (he had earlier ruled jointly with his stepmother for twenty-two years).

Thutmose conquered more than 350 cities and broadened Egypt's empire to its widest extent, from the Euphrates River in northern Syria to the Fourth Cataract of the Nile, deep in Nubia. Thutmose was only twenty-three-years old and had only been pharaoh for a few months when he waged war against the combined might of Canaan and Palestine, whose growing strength threatened Egyptian interests in the region. The Siege of Megiddo, notable for the relatively complete records kept of it, ended in Thutmose's overwhelming victory, smashing his enemy's armies and beginning the complete subjugation of the Levant.

## RAMESSES THE GREAT

One of ancient Egypt's most successful and famous pharaohs, Ramesses II (r. 1279–1213 BC) is known as a great campaigner despite the inconclusive result of his most famous battle at Kadesh (see page xx). His enemies included the Nubians, the Libyans, the Sherden (one of the "Sea Peoples"), and most especially the Hittites, whose expanding empire clashed with Egypt's in the volatile Levant. Most of Ramesses's military activities, however, occurred in just the first decade of his sixty-six-year reign. Yet he was by no means inactive; the monuments, temples, and cities of this era speak convincingly of a strong leader governing a prosperous and organized empire.



Above: *At the main entry to Abu Simbel, four gigantic seated statues of Ramesses II guard the entrance. The temple itself was cut into a cliff.*

## The Strangeness at Amarna

Perhaps the most arresting pharaoh of ancient Egypt is Akhenaton, also known as Amenhotep IV, who ruled 1353–36 BC. From a freshly built capital at Amarna and with his beautiful queen, Nefertiti, at his side, Akhenaton embarked on a mission unprecedented in Egypt's history: to convert Egypt to a nearly monotheistic religion that placed the sun god Aton above all others. The pharaoh's religious conviction, although nearly unique, was clearly strongly personal and well defined, and his attempted cultural revolution extended to artwork, in which pharaoh and queen were shown with oddly elongated heads; iconography—with the distinctive rayed sun of Aton prominently displayed; and even the written language. Akhenaton's successor, Tutankhamun, the pharaoh famous for his spectacular tomb, rejected many of these innovations when he came to power, and the first pharaohs of the next dynasty restored the religion and several even defaced monuments, so that the Akhenaton period stands out in stark relief from its more uniform cultural surroundings.

Left: *Akhenaton in the Amarna art-style. This style did not seek to flatter the subject but, instead to depict them as they generally appeared; many had elongated skulls*



Left: *A statue of Thutmose III, the 6th Pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty. Thutmose created the largest Egyptian Empire, conducting seventeen military campaigns. He is buried in the Valley of the Kings. The temple is dedicated to the sun god, Amon-Ra*



Top: *Burial mask for King Tutankhamun. DNA testing has shown that he is the son of Akhenaten and his sister/wife.*



# THE NUBIAN KINGDOM OF KUSH

By the beginning of the eighth century BC, Egypt had once again fractured into dynastic confusion, with multiple pharaohs ruling from competing capitals and powerful, wealthy cults—particularly at Thebes—on the rise. The confusion created an opening for Egypt's southern neighbor, the Nubian Kingdom of Kush. In 760 BC the Kushite king, Kashta, invaded. It was a reversal of the pattern; in previous centuries Egypt had expanded south into Nubia and the two nations shared many cultural similarities, including building pyramids to honor their dead, but never before had Kush established control of Egypt.

## THE TWENTY-FIFTH DYNASTY

Relatively little is known about the details of the Kushite campaign. Kashta reached Thebes with his army and installed his daughter as the successor to the high priestess of Amun; his successor (and possibly his son) Piye had established control throughout Upper Egypt. Meanwhile, in Lower Egypt, a king named Tefnakht had consolidated his control, reaching beyond his capital of Sais to the important city of Memphis and besieging Herakleopolis. Piye responded with the full might of Kush and conquered the rest of Egypt, with, it seems, little trouble. Yet Piye did not retain control of the Delta. Content to rule Kush and Upper Egypt, he left Egyptian vassals in place in the north.

His brother Shabako, who succeeded him, was more ambitious. In about 715 BC, he reconquered the whole of Egypt, moved the capital to Thebes, and initiated a brief renaissance of traditional Egyptian art, architecture, and religion, which Shabako—like the other Kushite rulers—held in very high regard. Perhaps because of this cultural reverence and the habit of keeping local Egyptian rulers in place, there seems to have been almost no internal dissent during Kush's reign, also known as the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty of Ancient Egypt.

Below: *The mortuary temple of Queen Hatshepsut, located beneath the cliffs at Deir el Bahari on the west bank of the Nile near the Valley of the Kings in Egypt.*



*Sudan Meroe Pyramids. Beginning in 300 BC, Nubian monarchs were buried at these pyramids, rather than Napata.*



Top: *The map shows the northeastern African tribes and kingdoms in 400 BC: Persia (Egypt), Kush, Blemmyes, Saba, and Damot.*

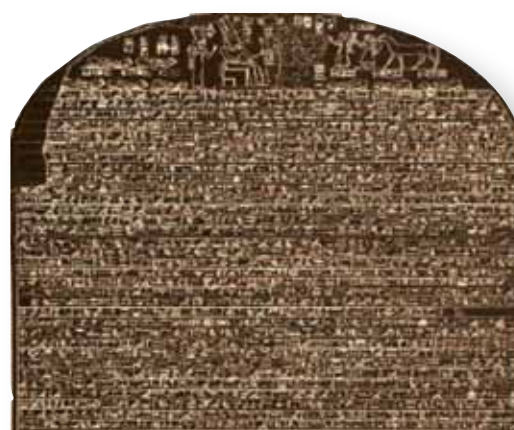
Above: *Nubian face in hieroglyphs.*

## Decline of Kush

In 690 BC, the Kushite pharaoh Taharqo ascended to the throne. If the Twenty-fifth Dynasty began with Kashta (the question is disputed), Taharqo was the fifth king of that line. Only one year into his reign he met with disaster in the form of the Assyrian king, Esarhaddon, then engaged in expanding his nation into a "world" power. With ease the Assyrians rolled over Egypt, not stopping until they had captured Memphis; Esarhaddon styled himself "King of Egypt" and began to collect tribute. Yet Egypt did not concern Esarhaddon nearly as much as territories closer to him (especially Babylonia), and within two years he had withdrawn, leaving Taharqo to reoccupy Egypt.

It was not to last. Again Esarhaddon invaded, this time reaching Thebes; but Taharqo's successor Tanwetamani fought back, reestablishing Kushite control for a brief period. In 663 BC, the Assyrians had had enough of Kush-Egypt; they pushed deep into the country and relentlessly sacked Thebes, a brutal injury for the pious pride of Egypt. Tanwetamani fled to Kush; the dynasty had ended. It was not quite the end of ancient Egypt, but it marked the beginning of the end of Kush, which would never again be reckoned a major power.

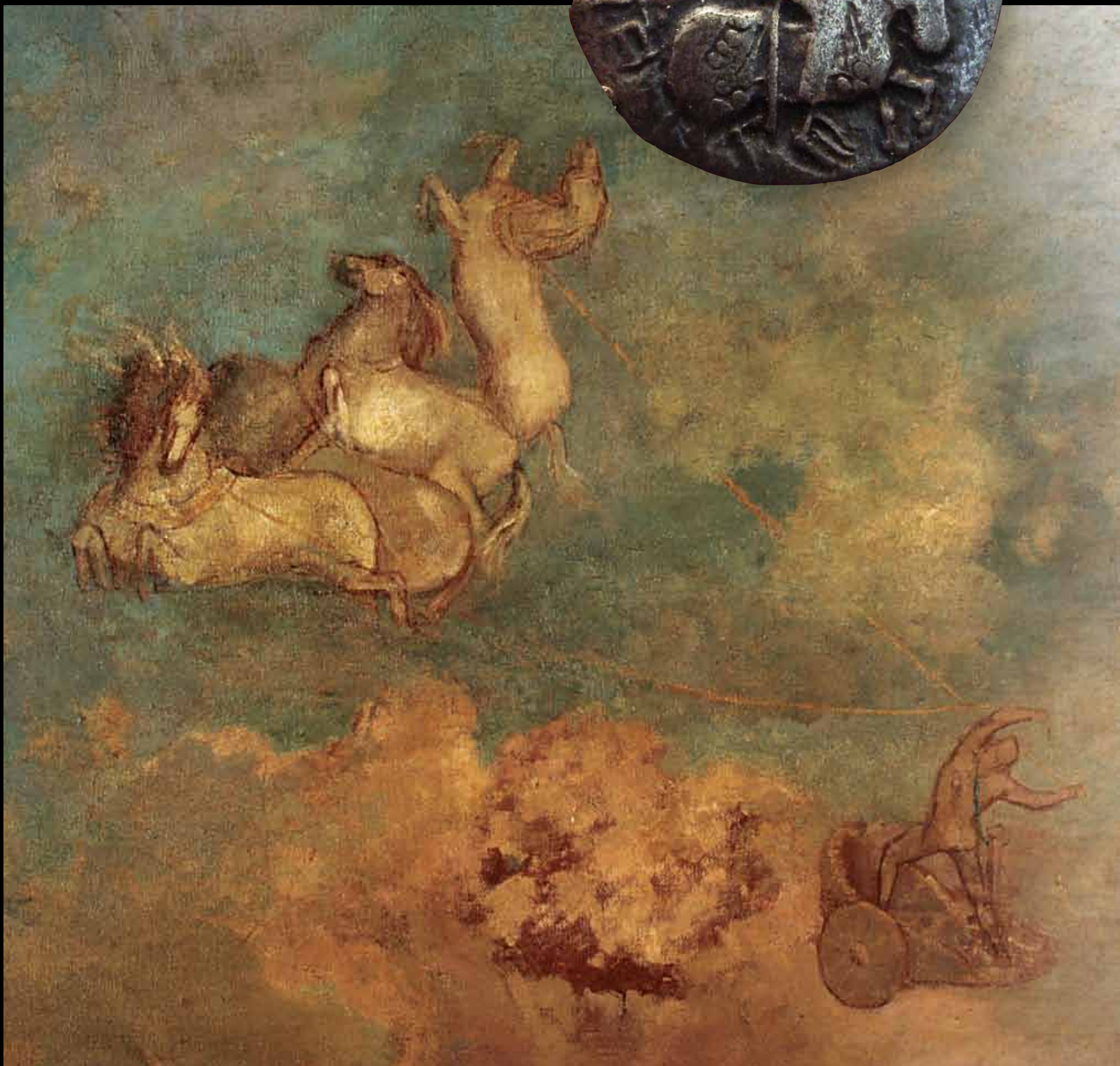
Below: *Piye's famous stela describes his campaign to end the northern rebellion, and describes how he achieved success.*





# HORSES AND CHARIOTS

Compared to the dog, whose domestication may go back 15,000 years, or even the sheep and goat, which were domesticated by the eighth millennium BC, the domestication of the horse is of relatively recent origin, and probably took place no earlier than 4000 BC. Horses were not used in warfare until some time after that and were not ridden to war until the first millennium BC. Overwhelmingly their earliest appearances on the battlefield were as chariot-pullers. As soon as they were ridden to war, however, they made an immediate and lasting difference.





## THE IMPACT OF CHARIOTS

The chariot, a wheeled vehicle designed to carry two or—far more rarely and at a later date—three warriors, was a major military innovation. Its speed, mobility, and height offered great advantages to its drivers, and allowed the archers (chariots were in essence mobile firing platforms for archers) to fire from a vantage point of relative safety. The chariot first appeared around 2000 BC in the ancient Near East and Anatolia and introduced a new subtlety to warfare.

Early chariots were too light to be used in frontal charges; instead, they harassed enemy infantry, breaking momentum and formations, carried men rapidly to and from the battlefield, and swooped down on exhausted infantrymen after the main battle had ended. Over open, fairly flat terrain chariots were weapons *par excellence*: it is not hard to imagine the terror they must have inflicted, speeding toward men who knew they could not hope to escape on foot. It was not long before every major culture in the ancient world fielded chariots; the chariot's advantages were obvious and the innovation spread rapidly. By 1200 BC, the chariot had reached as far as China.

Chariots were also used off the battlefield as transportation vehicles, racing vehicles, and as important status symbols; the appearance of the horse and chariot in ancient Eurasia marks an important step in the formation of large empires and complex social hierarchies.



*Ancient Assyrian wall relief of a lion hunt made from a chariot.*



Above left: A silver Hunnish coin from the 5th century AD, depicting a horse and rider.  
 Above: A relief of a mounted archer—the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal—hunting. The relief is from the walls of the Royal Palace in Nineveh.  
 Right: Boadicea, or Boudica, leader of the Queen of the British Iceni tribe, and leader of the uprising against the Roman occupiers. She stands in her war chariot—note the spiked wheels that would chop down men and horses.  
 Far right: A hand-colored woodcut of King Henry VII of England on horseback.



## Horses in War

As soon as horseback riding became common among warriors, the mounted soldier became a crucial part of every army. The use of the horse for war may have reached its apogee in the Late Middle Ages, when knights dressed themselves and their steeds in heavy, expensive armor and clashed on the fields of Europe. For a knight, a horse was not an accessory but a necessary implement of war. Other cultures also made use of the horse to devastating effect: most famously, perhaps, were the Huns, whose mounted archers decimated resistance and sped away before they could be engaged. The Huns invented the stirrup, a crucial tool for precise control of a horse. Spanish horses deserve at least as much credit as their human conquistadors for conquering the peoples of South and Central America; centuries earlier the Normans had conquered Ireland with ease thanks in large part to their cavalry. Today, the long history of the horse in war has largely come to an end, but as late as World War I opposing armies fielded horse-mounted cavalymen.



# THE PUNIC WARS

Founded in the late ninth century BC, Carthage was initially one of many Phoenician colonies. By the sixth century BC, Carthage was founding its own colonies and building its own fortresses in the Western Mediterranean, fighting off enterprising Greeks in the process. By the fifth century BC, after the Achaemenid Empire had overrun Phoenicia, Carthage had become an economic powerhouse and assumed leadership of all the Phoenician colonies still remaining. Around the same time, Carthage began expanding into North Africa, fighting native Libyans in the east, Numidians to the south, and Mauri to the west, until they occupied the entire Mediterranean coast as far to the east as the Gulf of Syrtis (modern Sidra). The Carthaginians also expanded onto the Western Mediterranean islands and southeast Iberia. Slaves, tin, gold, and other precious commodities flowed through Carthage's market cities (called *emporía* by the Greeks). Carthage's power was her wealth, earned through a trade fiercely protected by her navy—but this would prove insufficient against a young, bellicose Roman Republic.

## The Battle of Cannae

Perhaps the most famous battle in the annals of all Western military history, Cannae demonstrated Hannibal's adaptability and tactical genius to the full. The Roman army outnumbered his almost two to one; in addition, the Romans were desperate, defending their home territory, and Hannibal commanded a mishmash of troops, many of them mercenaries, all of them far from home. The Romans lined up in a block formation, planning to land hard on Hannibal and crush him in one blow. Instead, by drawing the Roman center forward, then encircling them, Hannibal managed to trap the entire Roman army. The carnage became horrific: a hundred Romans died every minute during that August afternoon. Hannibal's amazing feat has been studied ever since by tacticians, and often mimicked.

Right: In 146 BC, the Romans conquered Carthage, and effectively destroyed the Empire: all surviving citizens were sold into slavery, all buildings burned and the walls broken. The city passed into ruin.

Below: Mosaic depicting Ulysses and the Sirens.



## THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

In 264 two factions in the city of Messana in Sicily asked Rome and Carthage both to intervene in their defense. Roman troops took control of the town and subsequently started expanding throughout eastern Sicily, ostensibly to preempt a Carthaginian attack on the main peninsula. The First Punic War would last more than twenty years. (The word "Punic" derives from the Latin word for "Phoenician.") Rome, which fielded a strong infantry but had no naval experience, learned several painful lessons about how to build and sail warships. Conversely, Carthage had no standing army, relying instead on mercenaries, but a tried and tested navy. For the bulk of the conflict, Rome suffered incredibly heavy losses, losing some seventeen percent of its male population by 247 BC. But through a combination of technological innovation, superior manpower, and sheer doggedness, Rome finally exhausted Carthage's ability to field new navies and armies and won the war—and all of Sicily—in 242 BC.

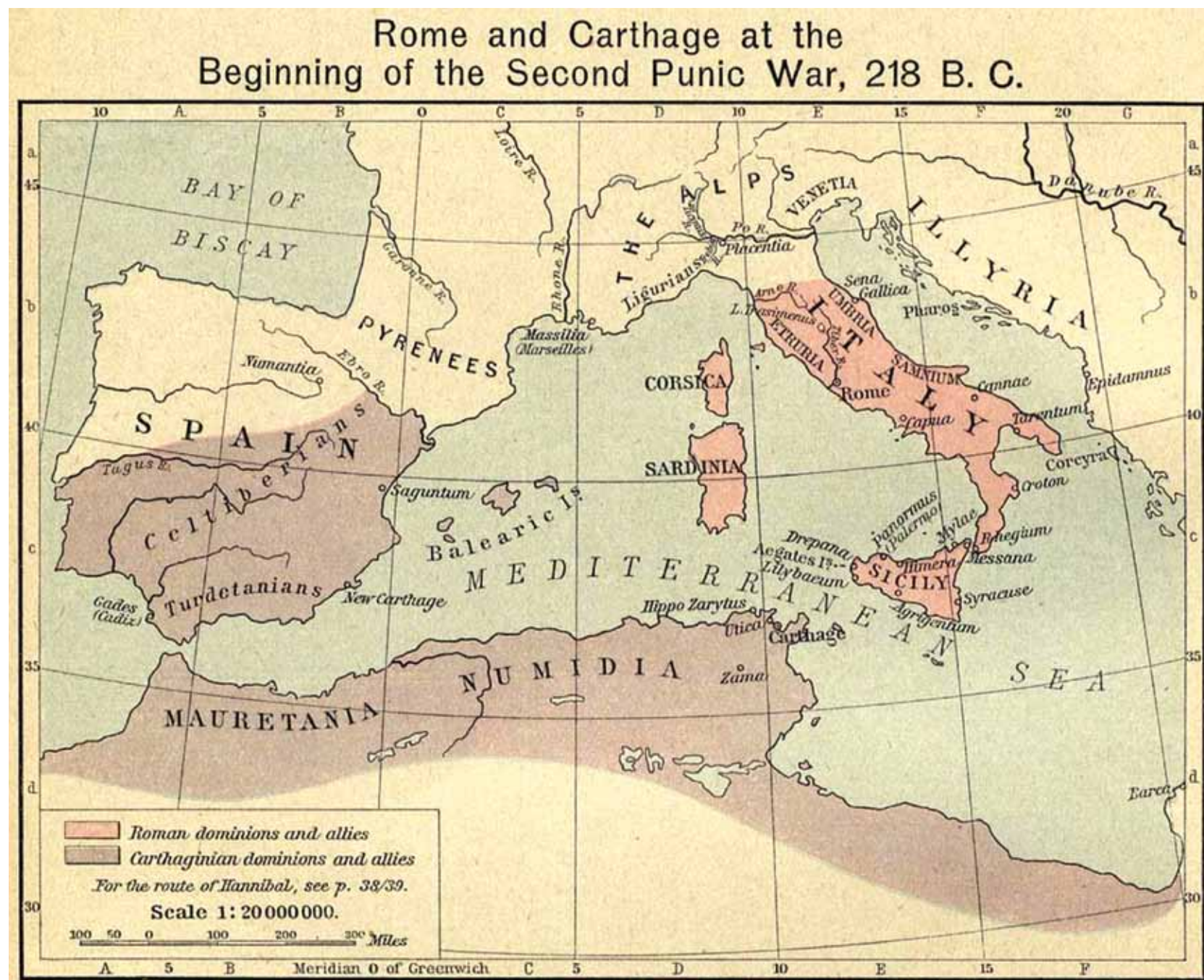
Right: To reach Italy and take on the Romans, Hannibal had to navigate the Pyrenees, the Alps, and many major rivers, as well as passing through the territory of the Gauls. All of this he achieved, and according to Polybius he arrived in Italy accompanied by 20,000 foot soldiers and 4,000 horsemen, and a few war elephants.



Above: Hannibal, a Punic Carthaginian military commander, is considered to be one of the greatest military commanders in history.







## THE SCOURGE OF ROME

Bad blood had fomented in both powers, and although Carthage had been beaten she had not been defeated. Carthaginian forces led by Hamilcar Barca, who had commanded Carthage's armies in Sicily during the First Punic War, quieted a rebellious army of mercenaries and reestablished control over North Africa; then, looking for new territory to replace lost Sicily, Hamilcar took his troops and pressed deep into Iberia (Spain). Gradually, Carthage's coffers refilled. Legend has it that Hamilcar instilled an unrelenting hatred of Rome in his son Hannibal, nine years old at the time of the Iberian expedition (237 BC).

In 219, Hannibal started the Second Punic War by attacking the Greek town of Saguntum, on the Iberian coast. Rome immediately mobilized two armies, one to meet Hannibal's advance in Gaul and one to prepare in Sicily for an invasion of Africa.

Hannibal, one of the greatest military minds in history, tricked his way past the Roman army sent to contain him and brought his army over the Alps. He was terrifically outnumbered and on the enemy's home ground, but won one astonishing victory after another, at the Trebia River in 218, Lake Trasimene in 217, and the crucial city of Cannae in 216. Rome lost about 83,000 men in the three battles, with many more captured, out of about 156,000. Hannibal had survived the Alps with about 26,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry, and 24 elephants.

Hannibal did not have the manpower to threaten the city of Rome, but rather meant to foment opposition to Rome among her allies and shake Rome's dominance through military victories. He succeeded so well at the latter that he became known as the Scourge of Rome, but he underestimated

Rome's grip on her allies and, when his desperately needed reinforcements were defeated in 207, Hannibal's plan shattered. In 202, he managed to escape Italy and return to Carthage with his army.

Meanwhile, after initially suffering devastating defeats in Spain, a Roman commander named P. Cornelius Scipio drove the Carthaginians out and now aimed directly at Africa. He landed in North Africa in 204 BC and captured the city of Utica in 203. Carthage rallied with Hannibal's return but the exhausted general lost to Scipio and Carthage surrendered. The terms were harsh; Carthage effectively became a vassal city, with no territory, no military independence, and financial obligations to Rome.

## CARTHAGO DELEND A EST

For the next fifty years Rome's ally, King Masinissa of Numidia, exploited the weakened state of Carthage, taking more and more territory with Rome's implicit blessing. Finally, in 151 BC, Carthage sent troops against Masinissa, breaking the terms of the treaty with Rome.

At the same time, a Roman senator named Cato had been leading a rhetorical war against Carthage, stirring up antagonism with his oft-repeated injunction, "Carthago delenda est!" ("Carthage must be destroyed!"). For a third and final time, Rome marched to war against its mortal enemy. In 146 BC, the Romans took the city, eventually fighting through the streets. The destruction of Carthage was complete: its surviving citizens were sold as slaves, all valuables were removed, the buildings burned and the walls broken. The city, forbidden for habitation by Roman decree, passed into ruin.

## The Corvus

Early on in the First Punic War it became clear to Rome that the war would be won or lost at sea, but Rome had no navy and no experience on the waves, in contrast to Carthage's large fleet and trained sailors. Displaying the practical innovation that would help make Rome the most powerful nation in the world, the Romans invented a device to turn naval warfare into infantry warfare—at which they excelled. This was the *corvus* ("crow"), a plank attached at one end to a Roman ship and fitted with a spike at the other. When a Roman ship pulled alongside a Carthaginian vessel, the Romans would drop the plank onto the enemy ship, the spike would fix it in place, and Roman soldiers could then board and fight hand-to-hand.

Top: A map showing the Roman and Carthaginian territories at the start of the Punic War in 218 BC.



# JUGURTHINE WAR

After the Second Punic War, Rome awarded their ally Masinissa, king of the Massylii of Eastern Numidia, with the territory historically belonging to the Masaesyli of Western Numidia. As a client kingdom of Rome, Numidia thus surrounded Carthage on all sides, a circumstance which proved instrumental in provoking the Third (and final) Punic War (see pages 20-21). Masinissa died in 118, leaving his sons Adherbal and Hiempsal to contend with their cousin Jugurtha, illegitimate by birth but lately acknowledged by Masinissa and possessed of both military skill and boundless ambition.



Above: Sulla captured Jugurtha, King of Numidia, and, after parading his captive around the streets of Rome he was thrown into the Tullianum prison, where he is said to have been starved to death.

Below: A map of Numidia during the Jugurthine War

## OUT OF AFRICA

According to African studies scholars Harvey Feinberg and Joseph B. Solodow, the proverb, “Out of Africa, something new,” dates at least to Aristotle and was current in ancient Rome, where “new” meant something dangerous or undesirable. As A. J. Woodman points out, Jugurtha seemed to fit this stereotype perfectly. His first act after the death of his uncle Masinissa was to assassinate Hiempsal, who had insulted him on account of Jugurtha’s illegitimate birth.

In the history of the war prepared by Gaius Sallustius Crispis (Sallust) in the late 40s BC (where most of our information about the war comes from), Jugurtha appears ruthless and warlike, attracting the most aggressive followers so that, even though Adherbal had “the larger party,” Jugurtha had little trouble conquering or convincing one city after another. After one bad defeat on the battlefield, Adherbal fled to Rome, where he pleaded his case as the rightful king of a client country.

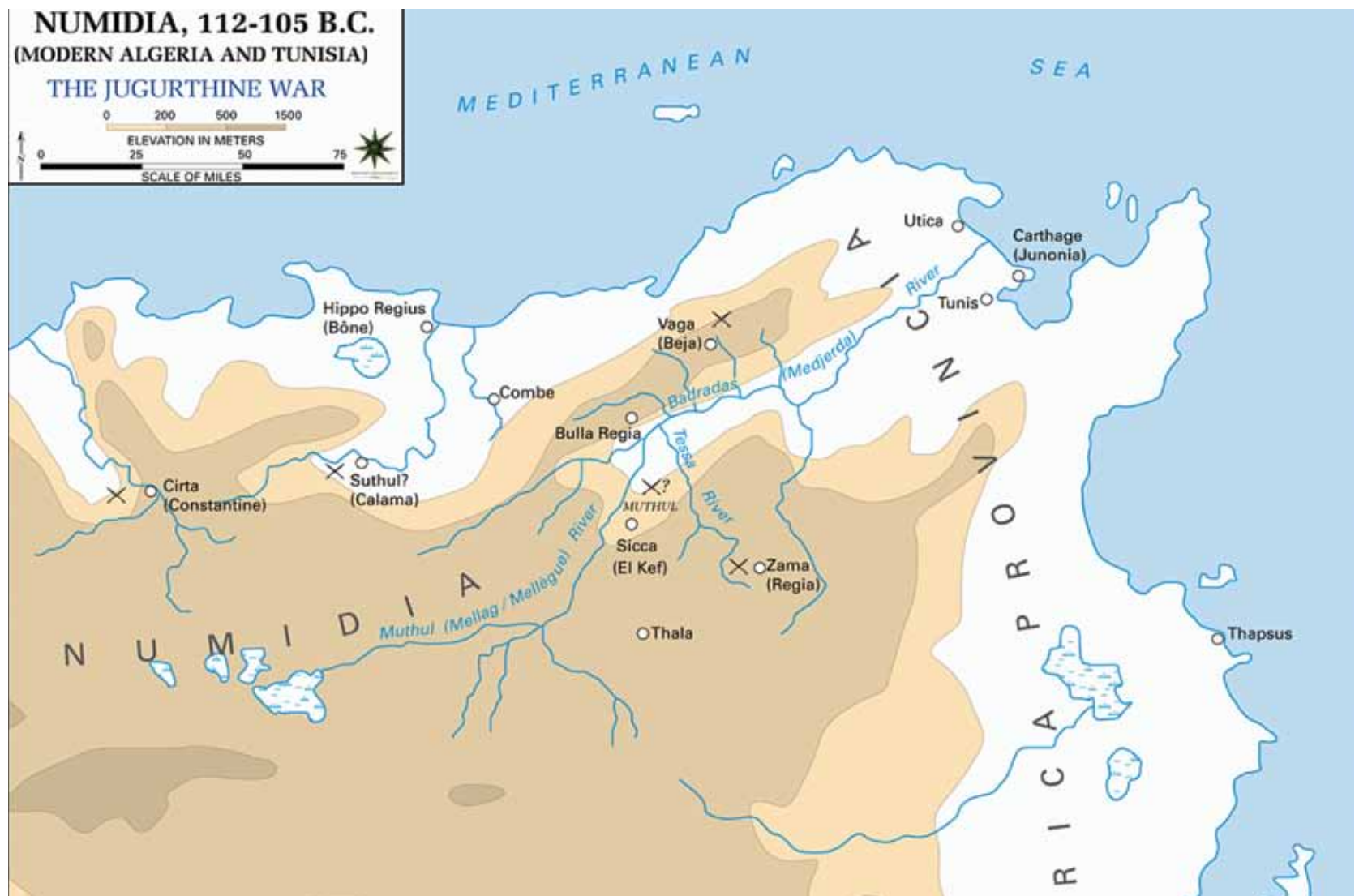
## A CITY FOR SALE

Unquestionably, Adherbal held the better legal position, but in the Late Republic money spoke loudly, and Jugurtha—who dismissed Rome derisively as “a city for sale”—bribed his way forward until a Roman commission divided Numidia into halves, awarding Jugurtha the west and Adherbal the east. Sallust explains that while the east had the appearance of higher prosperity, thanks to an “abundance of harbors and public buildings,” in fact the west had the better value owing to its richer soil and greater population.

Jugurtha gathered from this outcome that money could gain forgiveness for any aggressive action, and Rome’s commission had hardly left Africa before he began ravaging Adherbal’s territory. He finally trapped Adherbal in his capital at Cirta, though not before Adherbal had sent a message to Rome, pleading for aid; to save his city, Adherbal surrendered to Jugurtha, who killed him.

In this instance, Jugurtha’s actions had far surpassed the power of bribery, and Jugurtha was surprised to discover that Rome had launched an army. For two years (112–110 BC), minor skirmishes ended mostly in Jugurtha’s favor, but the Numidian violated a truce established in 110 and set out to eradicate Rome’s presence in Numidia altogether. In 108 BC, a Roman army, commanded by Caecilius Metellus, drove Jugurtha into the borderlands after the Battle of the Muthul, but the wily and warlike Jugurtha harried them in a grueling guerilla war. Finally, in 106 BC, under the new commander Gaius Marius and his lieutenant Lucius Cornelius Sulla, the Romans ran Jugurtha to ground.

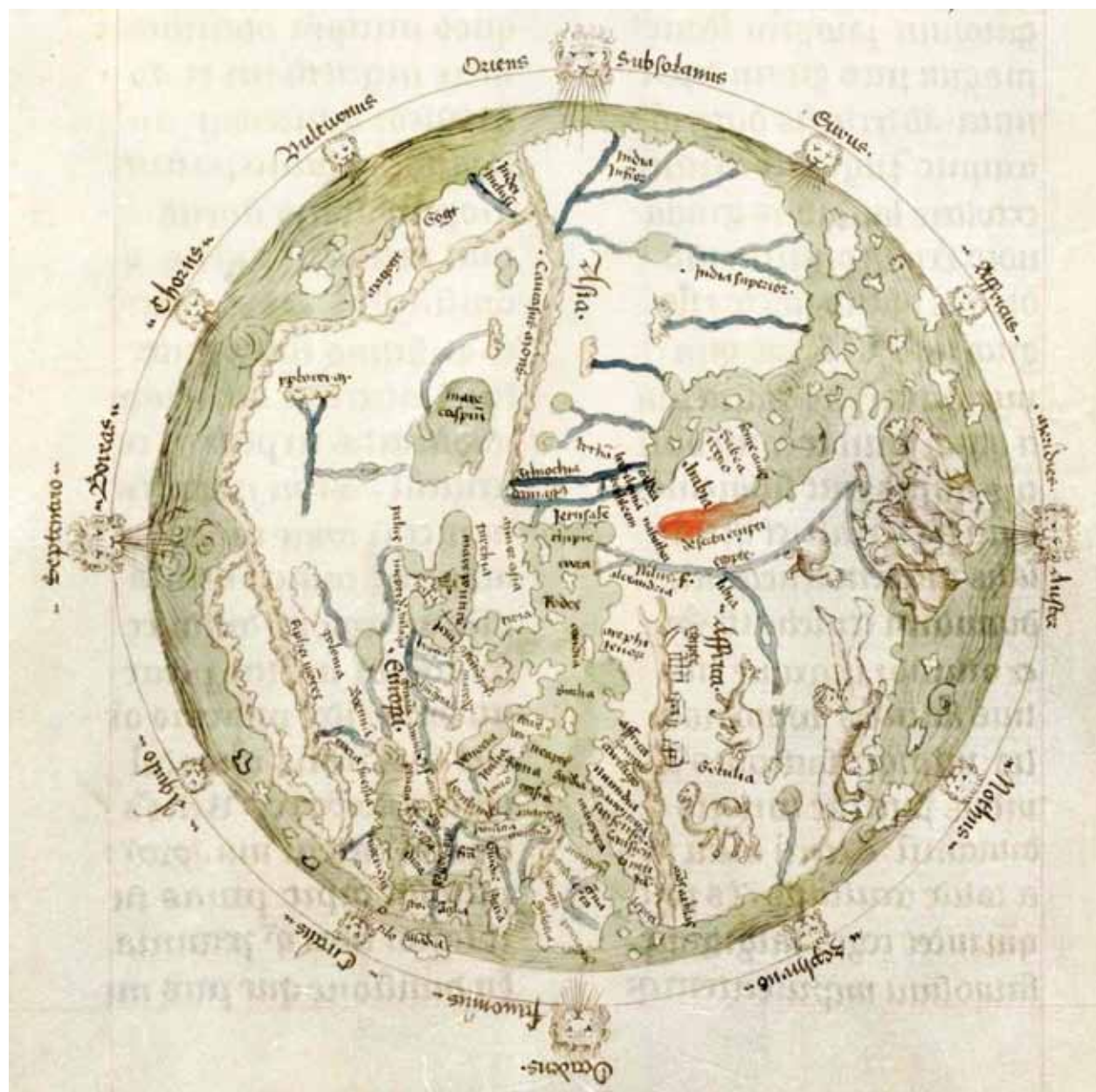
The conclusion of the Jugurthine War firmly established Rome’s position in Northern Africa but more than that, it played a major role in the fall of the Republic. Marius’s reorganization of the army (see pages xx) resulted in the establishment of a permanent, powerful army, loyal primarily to its commanders: this would contribute a great deal to the rise of Julius Caesar (Marius’s nephew) and the military expansion of the empire.



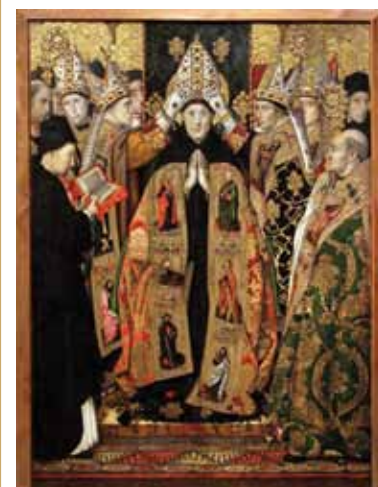


# VANDALS

From the days of Carthage on, control of Northern Africa by the various Mediterranean powers was limited mostly to the coasts, towns, and farms located in front of the plateaus, themselves bordering the vast sweep of the Sahara Desert. The advent of Christianity did little to change the situation, so that by the time the Western Empire began to crumble in the early fifth century AD African tribesmen, more-or-less ignored for centuries, carried their ancient religion with them in their rampages between increasingly isolated fortresses. Yet it would not be these Berbers who brought Roman North Africa to its knees, but another “barbarian” group—this one already Christian.



Left: Map of a Swiss codex that contains the “Conspiracy of Catilin” and the “Jugurthine War” by Sallust.



Above: Saint Augustine is shown being consecrated by several other bishops as Bishop of Hippo in Roman North Africa in AD 395 (anachronistically wearing 15th century dress).

## HERETIC INVADERS

Like many other Germanic tribes, the Vandals had been converted to a particular branch of Christianity called Arianism—one denounced as a heresy by the Roman Catholic Church—when they still lived in Eastern Europe. During the Migration Period (approximately the fourth to sixth centuries AD), the Vandals, with their brethren, slashed their way westward through an increasingly unstable Western Empire. They reached Spain, where they contended for supremacy with other barbarian peoples, primarily the Visigoths and the Suevii. Despite a resounding victory over the Suevii at the Battle of Mérida in 428, in 429 the Vandal king Gaiseric migrated with an army of about 50,000 and as many as 30,000 others—in fact his entire people—to the Roman province of Africa.

The governor of that province, Boniface, had in fact invited the Vandals the previous year to aid him in a revolt against Rome, but by the time they arrived Boniface had been reconciled and tried to call Gaiseric off. Instead, Gaiseric launched a full-scale invasion of Africa. In 431 the Eastern Empire (Byzantium) sent an army that, led by Boniface, managed to briefly lift the siege of the important city of Hippo before Gaiseric pounded it. Shortly afterward he took Hippo

(killing Saint Augustine, one of the Fathers of the Catholic Church, in the process). By 435 Rome came to terms, ceding Mauretania and Numidia to Gaiseric, and doubtless breathed a sigh of relief. If so, it was premature: Gaiseric, after a four-year period of consolidation in his new African empire, invaded Carthage, seizing the city and the province (the last remaining Roman foothold in Africa) in 439.

Yet still the Vandals were not done. From Carthage they launched fleets of ships, full of both conquerors and pirates, and made the Mediterranean their playground. Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia all were conquered; Vandal raids struck everywhere from Spain to Rhodes and Epiros (their sack of Rome [see page xx] is only the most famous example). In addition, Gaiseric and his successors brutally persecuted Roman Catholics, strongly promoting Arianism instead. Despite all this, the short-lived Vandal Empire—it fell to Byzantine emperor Justinian I in 533—left little impact on the culture and politics of North Africa. Gaiseric and his Vandals apparently made an effort to Romanize themselves, largely adopting the language, customs, architecture, and even the administrative systems of their enemies. As a result, little distinctly “Vandal” evidence of their occupation now exists.



Above: *The Barberini Ivory* is from a Byzantine Diptych. It is thought to represent the Emperor Justinian, triumphant in battle.



# BERBERS AND ARABS

For centuries, the Berber people of North Africa (also known as Imazighen) lived and worshipped in their own way, influenced by but largely ignored by Ancient Egypt, Carthage, and Rome. Syncretism between these and native African traditions produced unique religions with ancient roots; thus up to the seventh century the Berbers worshipped a god named Baal-Hammon, a reflex of both the ancient Semitic god Ba'al and the Libyan-Egyptian god Amon (Amun). In the seventh century AD, however, these ancient traditions came crashing to a close, as the Islamic tribes of Arabia swept across northern Africa in one of many Arab conquests.

Below: *This map shows the great expanse of the Moslem empire. Muhammad (622–632) governed most of the Arabian peninsula, the Caliphate Rashidun (632–661) expanded it east into Asia and west along the northern African coast, and the Umayyad Caliphate (661–750) conquered the Iberian peninsula, the rest of the northern Africa coast, and farther into Asia.*

## HOW THE WEST WAS WON

As early as 683, one Muslim army successfully drove all the way across North Africa, but its commander was killed on the return journey. It would become a familiar problem: the Berbers would resist heroically, convert desultorily upon defeat, and rise in rebellion and lapse into apostasy as soon as the army passed. Some Berber leaders, notably Kusayla in Tunisia and Queen Kahina in Numidia, pushed the Arabs out and established their own brief kingdoms. Arabian governors found a solution by incorporating Berbers directly into the army, thus knitting them into the fabric of Islamic society and winning their loyalty by permitting them a share of the spoils—which were considerable, especially after Tariq ibn Ziyad, a Berber, led his troops into Spain in 711 (see page 78). The Berbers were formidable warriors, especially as cavalymen, but it was not long before the army “solution” became the Umayyad Caliphate’s greatest problem.

Northern Africa was now Muslim, but the Arabian governors and military commanders of al-Maghrib (“the West”) treated their Berber compatriots badly. Excessive taxes, illegal enslavement—particularly of girls—and use at the forefront of dangerous battles turned the simmering Berber resentment into a full boil. Encouraged by the precepts of the Khariji movement, a religiopolitical doctrine that preached equality among Muslims, democratic elections, and other populist opinions, the Berbers revolted.

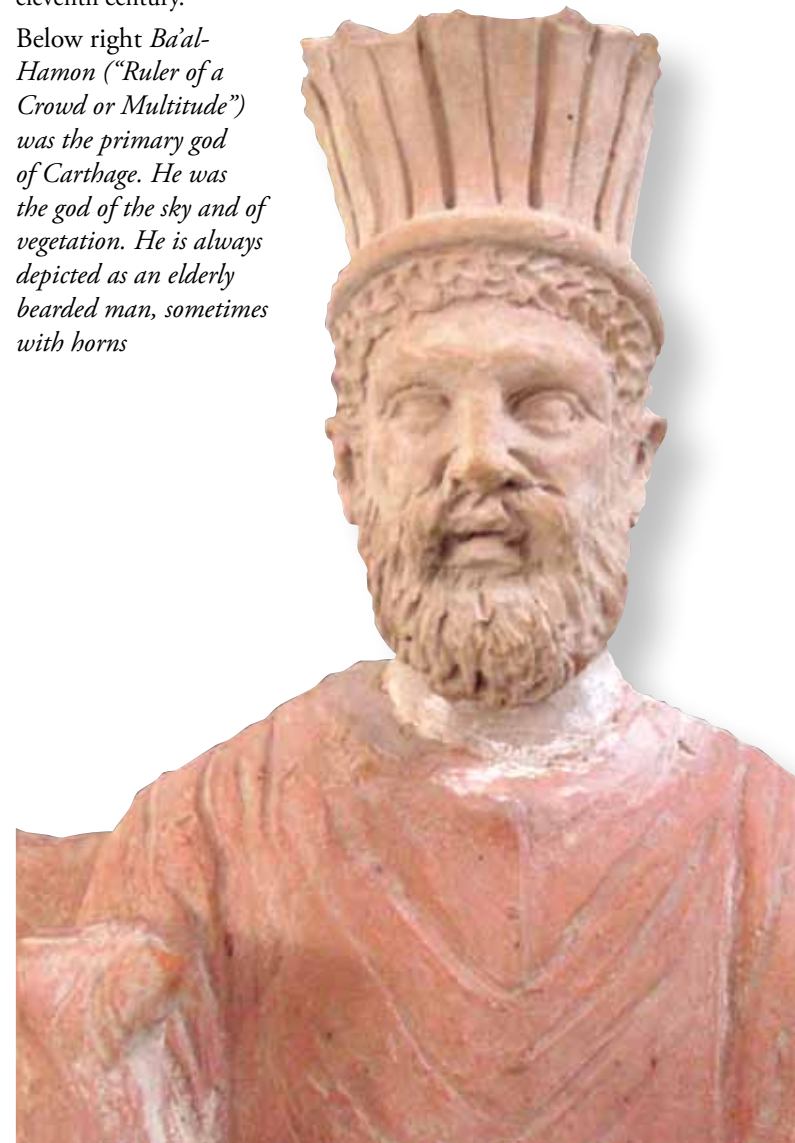
Led initially by Maysara al-Matghari, apparently an officer in the caliph’s army, the revolt began in Tangier and soon spread through the Maghrib and into al-Andalus (Spain). Since the Berbers made up a substantial portion of the Arabian forces in these regions, a revolt by Berber troops was a serious matter. The Berbers won an impressive victory at the Battle of the Nobles (named for the number of felled Arabian aristocrats) in 740 and smashed an Umayyad army from Syria at the Battle of Bagdoura in 741. By the end of 742 the Berbers seemed poised to take back the whole of North Africa and al-Andalus besides, but internal divisions allowed an Egyptian army to defeat them at the siege of Kairouan.

The Umayyad Caliphate was on its last legs and fell to the Abbasids in 750 (see page 150). Although the Abbasids reasserted some control over North Africa, several Berber kingdoms—including Berghwata, Sijilmasa, and Tahart—retained their independence until the eleventh century.

Below right *Ba'al-Hamon (“Ruler of a Crowd or Multitude”) was the primary god of Carthage. He was the god of the sky and of vegetation. He is always depicted as an elderly bearded man, sometimes with horns*



Right: *A studio portrait of a group of Berbers—the indigenous ethnic group of North Africa, spread the Mediterranean to the Niger River and from the Atlantic to the Siwa oasis in Egypt. Many Berbers call themselves imazighen, or some variant of the word—possibly meaning “free people” or “free and noble men”.*





# ALMORAVID AND ALMOHAD

During the Middle Ages, not one but two powerful reform movements erupted from the sands of the western Sahara Desert, rocking the Muslim kingdoms of North Africa and Europe to the core. Although similar in origins and actions, the Almoravids and Almohads had no love for each other, the latter supplanting the former only a century after Yahya ibn Irahim of the Gudala tribe returned from a transformative pilgrimage to Mecca, with a bold new vision.

## CONVERSION AND CONQUEST

The Gudala were one of several tribes making up the Sanhaja, a Berber people of the Western Sahara and Atlas Mountains. One of the most significant tribes was the Lamtuna, who operated the important trading city of Awdaghust (until the Soninke of Ghana took it from them). It was among the Lamtuna that the Islamic teacher Abdulla ibn Yasin, brought to the Sanhaja by an inspired Ibn Irahim, settled. He found the Sanhaja to be Muslim in name only; as his patron (who died soon after his return) had reported, the Sanhaja still practiced in their traditional ways. Ibn Yasin sparked a fundamentalist reform movement, al-Murabitun (Almoravid, “those who live in a hermitage”), that not only converted the Sanhaja to orthodox Islam, it transformed them into religious crusaders.

At first the Almoravids directed their energies southward, reclaiming control over the Trans-Saharan trade route by invading the Ghana Empire (see page 26); but already in 1042 Ibn Yasin issued a jihad against the Sanhaja, the Almoravids’ own people, as apostates. Moving north into the Berber kingdoms of modern Morocco, the Almoravids conquered one after another as far as Algiers by 1082. They founded the city of Marrakech, thenceforth the Almoravid capital, in 1062, and crossed the Strait of Gibraltar in 1086. By now led by Yusuf ibn Tashufin, the Almoravids inspired a brief resurgence of Muslim control over Spain, which Christian kings now aimed at retaking for themselves (see page 79). This battle enabled the Almoravids to present themselves as defenders of the Muslim faith, although Ibn Tashufin had become the first Maghrebian to hire Christian mercenaries during his conquests in Algeria.

## CHALLENGERS

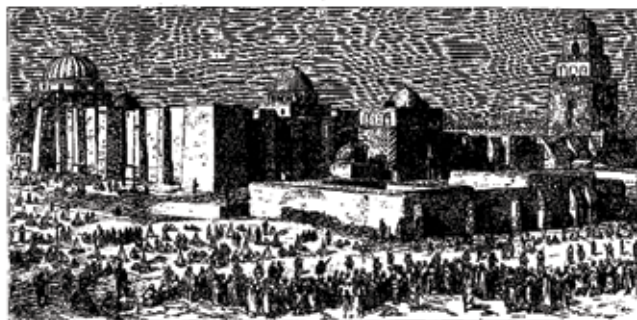
The Almoravid dynasty eventually fell to a second reforming movement one that also sprouted among the Berber peoples of North Africa. This movement, led by Ibn Tumart, a self-professed messiah, first took root in Tinmallal in the Atlas Mountains, where he sent his followers on brutal campaigns until the mountains were his. The Almoravid caliph, Ali ibn Yusuf, had suffered a loss of prestige from a series of recent defeats in Spain—where he himself led the troops—and Ibn Tumart’s revolutionaries, called Almohads (from the Arabic for “those who affirm the unity of God”), seized upon dissatisfaction with Almoravid rule to attract support from the disenchanted Berbers.

Ibn Tumart died in 1130, but his followers boiled out of the Atlas Mountains—notwithstanding the Almoravid forts, hastily built at the passes of the mountains—and reached Marrakech by 1129, but were forced back from the city. For the next several years the new Almohad leader, Abdul-Mu’min, ranged across mountainous Morocco, gathering his strength and siphoning support from the Sanhaja. In 1144, Abdul-Mu’min routed the Almoravid caliph near Oran. In 1145, the caliph was killed; the following year Fez fell to siege; the year after that the Almohads returned to Marrakech and this time seized the city, which now became their own capital. The Almoravid dynasty held on only in the Balearic Islands as the Almohads took the remains of Al-Andalus. Although they did not hold Spain against the Christians, they exceeded their dynastic predecessors in northern Africa, where they pressed eastward as far as Tripoli.

Below left: *Kairouan was founded in about AD 670 when the Arab general Uqba ibn Nafi selected a site—then in the middle of an enormous forest, infested with wild animals and snakes—as the location of a military post from which to conquer the West. It was located far from the sea where it was safe from continued attacks of the Berbers.*



Above: From the title page of the *De scientia motus orbis*, this is an engraving by Albrecht Dürer featuring the astrologer Mashallah. The compass here serves as an icon of religion as well as science, referring to God as the architect of creation.



Below: *The pontoon bridge of Seville was the first and only bridge for nearly seven centuries on the River Guadalquivir as it passes through the city of Seville.*





# GHANA

The empire of Ghana does not appear in the history of Africa until Arab visitors wrote about it in the eighth century, but from their description it is clear that the hegemony of the Soninke people had been well established. The Soninke called their empire Wagadu; the name *Ghana* comes from their word for the king. (The modern nation of Ghana bears no relationship to the ancient empire, except that the modern name was deliberately chosen to evoke the former state.) Ghana was first and foremost a trading empire, controlling the flow of slaves and especially gold from the savanna and forest in the south to the Sahara in the north.



Above: Salt flats in Ghana—salt, along with gold and slaves, was an important commodity.

## Trans-Saharan Trade

The trade route that enabled the formation and growth of the Ghana Empire began in Kumbi Saleh, traveled northeast to Awdaghost, then left Ghana and cut northeastward across the vast sands of the Sahara to Sijilmasa before ending at Tahert, an important city in Islamic Maghreb. Besides gold and slaves, commodities traded from the African interior included iron implements, livestock, manufactured items such as woven cloth, pottery, leather goods, and foodstuffs such as nuts, fruits, and honey. In return, northern traders brought copper, horses, perfumes, and the most important import, salt. The wealth of empire thus depended indirectly on just one thing: camels. Without this hardy animal, capable of bearing burdens over long distances with minimal water, the overland route across the Sahara never could have developed.



Above Map showing the Ghana Empire at its Zenith. Right: The Slave holding cell in Elmina Castle in Ghana. Ghana was a trading Empire, and played a central role in controlling the flow of Slaves.

## THE LAND OF GOLD

The origins of the empire of Ghana are largely unknown, but it seems that the Soninke discovered iron early, granting them a technological edge over their enemies. A bit later they acquired horses, which naturally became another battlefield advantage. An Arab author of the mid-eleventh century, the last peak of the empire, attributes an army of 240,000 to the Soninke king, though this would be an incredible size.

By the time the Arabs encountered the Soninke in the eighth century, they had truly become an empire in the sense that they had subjugated many surrounding peoples, turning formerly independent chiefs into tributary princes. Like other successful conquering states, the Soninke seem to have allowed the traditional rulers of a given people to retain local powers, insisting only on an overlordship and taxation of gold production and trade. As the wealth of the Ghana kings increased, so too did their ability to further expand: by the tenth century, the Soninke exerted influence on all of the peoples living along the Senegal River, allowing them control over the important gold mines at Bambuk.

The gold of Ghana became legendary: in the tenth century, Arab writers described it as emerging from the ground “like carrots” or growing on stalks like grain. Although these tales were naturally untrue, such awe stemmed from the seemingly inexhaustible supply of the precious commodity, whose real locations—the mines—were kept strictly secret, undoubtedly a wise decision. In the trading cities of Ghana, principally Awdaghost

and Kumbi Saleh (tentatively identified as the twin-city capital described by foreign visitors), large Arab trading communities developed, allowed to practice their religion freely although the Soninke elites lived separately and continued to worship in their own traditional ways.

## FALL OF THE GHANA EMPIRE

The Ghana Empire reached its pinnacle in the tenth century, but by the beginning of the eleventh already the elements that would topple it were in place and beginning to have an effect. The monopoly on gold enjoyed by the Soninke rulers of Ghana was shaken by the discovery of gold outside the empire’s control. Crops and livestock began to suffer from increasing desertification. Finally, in the 1050s the Almoravids, Berber fundamentalists dedicated to the spread and proper worship of Islam, invaded and moved against Ghana, capturing Awdaghost in 1054. A long war with the Almoravids, which ended with the capture of Kumbi Saleh in 1076, coupled with internal revolts, cost the Soninke their empire, for even after Ghana regained control from the Almoravids in the early twelfth century, the structural integrity of the empire had been irrevocably damaged. Unable to fend off the Susu people from the south, in the thirteenth century Ghana finally fell to the emerging Mali Empire.





# MALI

In 1203 the Susu kingdom rebelled against the Ghana Empire and defeated the Soninke. The Susu king, Sumanguru, took the capital and the empire for himself, but found the same problems bedeviling him that had troubled the Soninke. Of these, the most pressing was the Malinke (or Mande) kingdom of Kangaba, another tributary state showing signs of rebellion. According to oral tradition, Sumanguru had eleven of the twelve heirs to the throne of Kangaba slain, leaving the twelfth, Sundiata Keita (“the hungry lion”), alive because he was sickly and crippled. These measures were not enough. In 1230 Sundiata took his throne and proceeded to found the Mali Empire.



## THE HUNGERING LION

Sundiata led his warriors on a series of raids and conquests, initially against some of his own relatives in order to firmly establish control over all the Malinke. In rapid succession he brought the kingdoms of Sangaran, Labe, and the tribes east of the Niger to heel. Unable to ignore this renegade behavior from one of his vassals, Sumanguru set out with an army, only to lose his life and his empire at the Battle of Kirina. Subsequently, Sundiata took over what remained of Ghana, but established a new capital at Niani for the now-triumphant Mali Empire.



## THE EMPIRE OF MALI

Sundiata and his successor, his son Mansa Ule, did not continue to make war themselves, but their battle-hungry army commanders continued to conquer until Mali exceeded Ghana in size, at its peak stretching from the city of Gao in the east to the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and as far as the southern tip of modern Algeria in the north to Niani in the south. It achieved this impressive size after ambitious generals conquered the kingdom of Songhai; Mali’s fabulously wealthy emperor, Mansa Musa, was on his famous pilgrimage to Mecca at the time.

The Mali royal family had converted to Islam as early as 1050, during the Almoravid advance (although one Arab source speaks of Sundiata’s conversion as well), but after the conquest of Songhai many millions of people who lived in the empire continued to practice their traditional religions. Wisely, the Mali emperors encouraged but did not force conversion to Islam.

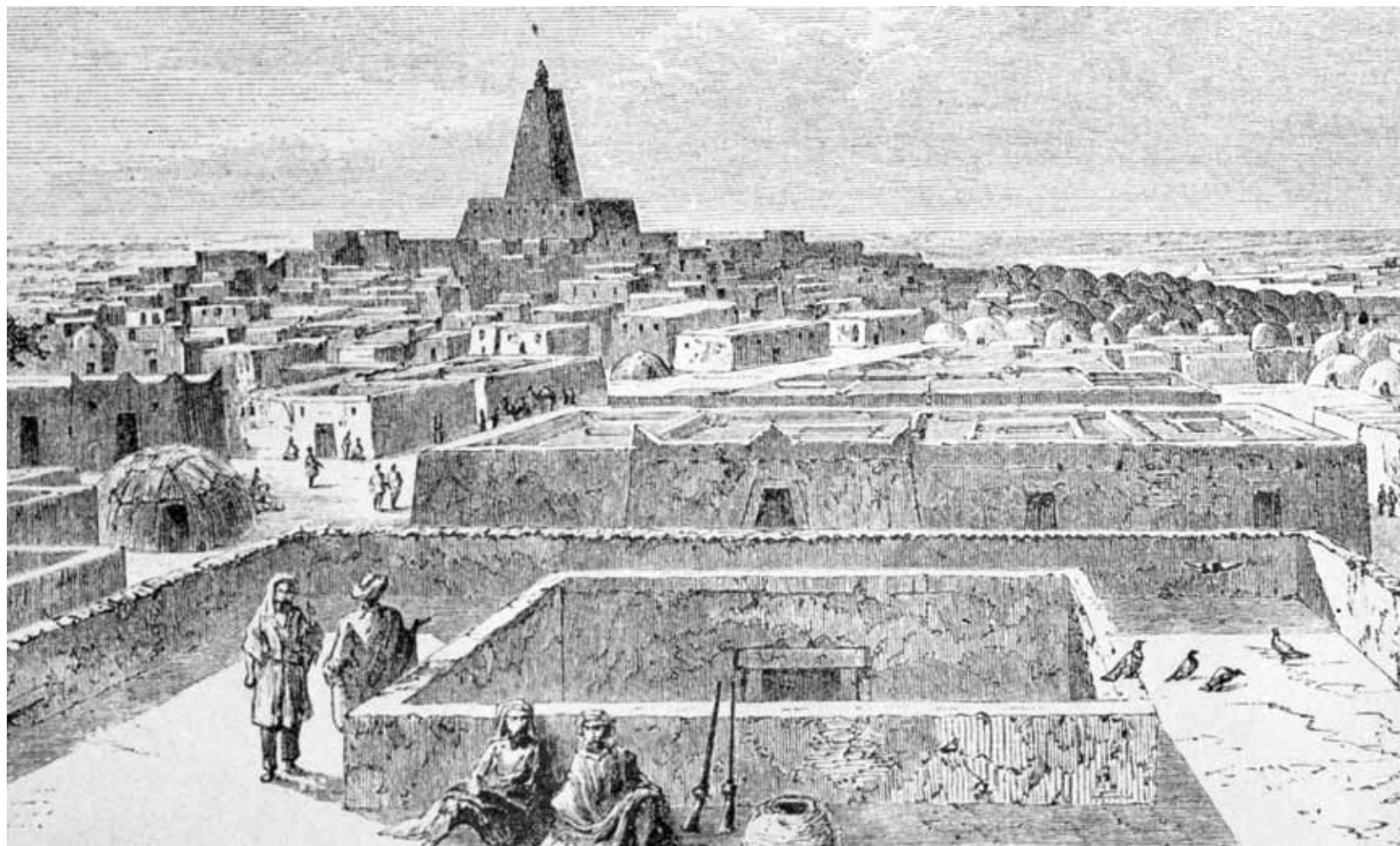
Sundiata learned this lesson after the conquest of Wangara, which boasted extensive gold mines but whose miners refused to work if forced to convert. As with Ghana, it was gold that gave Mali its power and influence, but Mali became even richer than Ghana because it had direct control over even more gold mines than Ghana had accessed. The order and peacefulness of the enormous, multicultural empire impressed foreign visitors; a mosque commissioned by Mansa Musa in Gao drew spectators into the seventeenth century. Such an empire requires a strong commanding hand, however, and within a few generations of Mansa Musa (reigned either 1307–1332 or 1312–1337), the empire’s constituent parts fractured, falling away under successive rebellions until by the mid-sixteenth century Mali was no larger—and no more important—than it had been before Sundiata rose to power.

Top: Image of a Saracen king of West Africa, believed to be Mansa Musa, Emperor of Mali, as depicted in a Catalan Atlas from 1375.

Above: Map showing the Mali Empire at its zenith.

Above left: Timbuktu seen from a distance by Explorer Heinrich Barth’s party, September 7, 1853.

Below: Engraving from 1858 of Timbuktu, in the book *Travel and Discovery* by Heinrich Barth.





# SONGHAI EMPIRE

Songhai, a sort of successor state to the Ghana Empire and the Mali Empire, which it conquered, is considered the last of the great empires of West Africa. Focused on the cities of Kukiya and especially Gao, Songhai exploded onto the international scene under Sunni Ali (r. 1464–92). A brilliant and ruthless military leader, Sunni Ali first marched on the city of Timbuktu, a wealthy and crucial center of trade, bringing such a large army that the ruling Tuareg people fled without fighting. Nevertheless, Sunni Ali did not treat the city well; the inhabitants called him a tyrant.



## The Oyo Empire

For about two centuries after 1600, the Yoruba people of the Oyo state, located near the southern coast of Western Africa, pursued a successful policy of expansion and economic development. Centralizing the government and modernizing the army, particularly with the use of horses, allowed the Oyo kings (called the oba) to conquer nearly all neighboring Yoruba tribes by about 1650; then they conquered the Dahomey kingdom, allowing them direct access to the sea and trade with Europeans at the port of Ajase. After a civil war in the late eighteenth century, however, the Oyo military declined, and although the empire remained wealthy, it proved unable to withstand a Dahomey insurrection and a Fulani invasion, and it crumbled early in the nineteenth century.

Right: *Manuscripts from Timbuktu, showing the interest in Astronomy and Mathematics*

Below: *The extent of the Songhai Empire at its height.*

## ISLAM AND EMPIRE

Timbuktu fell in 1468; only a few years later, Sunni Ali's army seized Jenne (modern Djenné, Mali), the other important trading city. The Songhai hegemony had truly begun, but Sunni Ali did not stop there. He built a fleet to control the Niger River and for seven years fought and won territory of the former Mali Empire. Although Sunni Ali was nominally Islamic, the Muslim scholars of Timbuktu hated him for his treatment of the city and his indifferent orthodoxy (he apparently worshipped traditional African gods as well as the Islamic Allah). After his death in 1492, his son Sunni Barou took the throne but refused the request of one of his father's most successful—and pious—generals, Mohammad Touré, to publicly confess to Islam. It proved to be a grave mistake.



## A GOLDEN AGE

Ambitious and devout, Mohammad Touré staged a coup. Taking the name Askia, the erstwhile general seized control of the emerging Songhai Empire and soon proved himself an even more brilliant leader than his predecessor, Sunni Ali. Militarily he was virtually unsurpassed in Western Africa, expanding Songhai territory to its largest extent by waging a series of successful wars and securing Songhai's monopoly on the salt and gold trades. Askia was also an excellent administrator and a champion of Islam, taking a *hajj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca and establishing the renowned Sankore University in Timbuktu, which instructed students in theology, geography, history, astrology, ethics, science, and more, and attracted scholars from all over the Islamic world.

Unfortunately this enviable state of affairs did not last long. Power struggles among his sons contributed to political fracture, trade declined, technology remained stagnant, and when Morocco invaded in 1591, seeking control of gold mines, Timbuktu, and Gao, the army fell apart in the face of European guns wielded by the invaders. The last gasp of an independent Songhai came in 1597, when Askia Nuh, its leader, died.

Top: *The Tomb of Askia, in Gao, Mali, is believed to be the burial place of Askia Mohammad I, one of the Songhai Empire's most prolific emperors. It is a fine example of the monumental mud-building tradition of the West African Sahel.*





# THE ASHANTI

The Ashanti rose to dominance in the eighteenth century, conquering the surrounding peoples with superior skill and technology, which they acquired from the Europeans then investigating Africa. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, the Ashanti leader, called the Ashanthe, controlled over 100,000 square miles and a population of more than three million. His army, the driving force of his empire, was impressive—up to 200,000 infantrymen armed with guns and organized into various types of corps, including a medical corps (virtually unique among African armies). The wealth of the Ashanti was the wealth of nineteenth-century Africa in general: gold and slaves. They traded both to the British, then busily settling along the Gold Coast, just west of the Slave Coast.



*A British officer depicted beside an Ashanti family dwelling; the architecture was typical of the Ashanti during the 18th to early 19th centuries.*

## WAR TO THE COAST

The imperial and military ambitions of the Ashanti, not to mention the economic benefit of direct access to the ocean, impelled their expansion south. In the early nineteenth century the Ashanti launched multiple wars against their great enemies, the Fanti, as well as against less-organized coastal nations. Led by Ashanthe Osei Tutu Kwadwo from 1801 to 1824, the Ashanti invaded the coastal regions three times, in 1811, 1816, and 1820, until finally the Fanti were decisively defeated and the Ashanti reigned supreme.



*Above: A map of Almina showing the forts of Coenraadsburg and St. George.*



*Above: Otumfuo Nana Prempeh I was an Asantehene ruler of the Oyoko Abohyen Dynasty of the Akan state of Ashanti. He ruled from March 26, 1888 until his death in 1931, and fought a war against the British in 1893.*

## EMPIRES COLLIDE

Even as the Ashanti marched to the sea, tension sprang up between them and the other mighty empire seeking a foothold on the Gold Coast: Britain. In 1807 the British ended the slave trade, thus extinguishing one major source of Ashanti wealth. Britain simultaneously began to eye the Ashanti advance warily, perceiving Ashanti aggression as a threat to their own territorial designs. Quite probably simple greed also intensified the discord: by now the gold mines of the Ashanti had become almost legendary.

In 1824 the two empires clashed for the first time. Under the command of the British governor of Sierra Leone, Sir Charles McCarthy, a force of British troops and African allies engaged a larger Ashanti force near Bonsaso and lost both the battle and McCarthy. The British were humiliated; McCarthy's skull became a feature of an annual Ashanti festival. The British finally drove the Ashanti back into the interior in 1831, deciding on the Pra River as the newly established boundary. The hard-won victory taught the British not to underestimate the Ashanti.

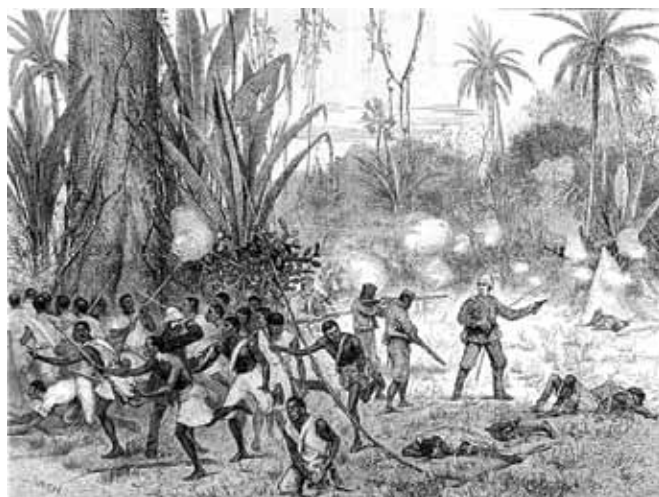
In 1873 the gathering storm finally broke. The proximate cause was Elmina, a region operated by the Dutch but owned—in their view—by the Ashanti. When the Netherlands handed the region over to Britain in 1871, the fuse had been lit. Both armies massed but the British, with superior technology and now more experience in Africa, won easily, occupying and razing the Ashanti capital of Kumasi in 1874. Civil insurrections broke out; a third and then a fourth Anglo-Ashanti war (respectively, 1895–96 and 1900) decisively defeated the weakened Ashanthe and the region fell into British hands.

*Below: Fort Witsen was established in 1656 near Takoradi on the Dutch Gold Coast. This fort was destroyed after a few years, and in 1684 the site was abandoned. A map from 1791 shows, however, that the Dutch had renewed their presence in the fort again.*



## War of the Golden Stool

The most important object in Ashanti culture is the Golden Stool, seat of the collective *sunsum* (soul or spirit) of the Ashanti people and the focus of the sacred foundation myth of the Ashanti nation. A gross failure on the part of the British to adequately appreciate the nature of the Golden Stool's value to the Ashanti led directly to yet another war. In 1900, Sir Frederick Hodgson, the governor of the Gold Coast, demanded the delivery of the Golden Stool. Deeply offended, the Ashanti rebelled, besieging Hodgson and his forces in Kumasi. The Ashanti did not have the manpower, guns, or allies to maintain the rebellion for more than nine months, when the British decisively put it down—but the Ashanti never did reveal the hidden Golden Stool to the British.

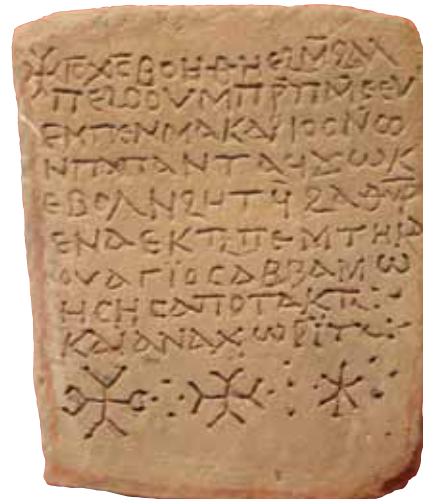


*Above: The Second Anglo-Ashanti War began in 1863 when a large Ashanti delegation crossed the river pursuing a fugitive. There was fighting, with casualties on both sides, but the governor's request for troops from England was declined and sickness forced him to withdraw of his troops in 1864.*



# AKSUM

Mani, the third-century Persian founder of the Manichaean religion, listed the four empires of the world as he knew it: Sileos (China?), Rome, Persia, and Aksum. Based at its capital city of the same name, Aksum had emerged from obscurity (the first mention of Aksum can be found in Claudius Ptolemy's work) to empire in barely a century. In the fourth century Aksum's most famous emperor, Ezana (303–350), would expand the empire's borders and influence even farther through a series of conquests, made in the name of his new religion: Christianity. Aksum was thus one of the first two nations to convert, after Rome.



Above: *The first mention of Aksum can be found in the writings of Claudius Ptolemy, the Greek-Roman mathematician and geographer.*



Above: *Bust of a woman with a rectangular face, from South Arabia. It may have been produced in a Sabaeen workshop. The rings on the front of the neck--the so-called rings of Venus--show it is a woman.*

## THE EMPIRE OF THE RED SEA

The second-century reference to Aksum mentions Adulis, a port on the Red Sea, and the primary source of the kingdom's wealth. Through it flowed the goods of Africa, Arabia, and even India, linking these places with the classical civilizations of the Mediterranean and Persia. Yet this coveted commercial role was not without competition: for centuries it had been played by the Sabaeans, a Semitic people whose kingdom of Saba (the Biblical Sheba) operated on the tip of the Arabian peninsula. Mani's assessment of Aksum as a mighty empire corresponds with Aksum's third-century conquest of Saba, followed in the fourth century by Emperor Ezana's western conquests of a people called the Noba and the kingdom of Meröe, the successor state of ancient Kush.

To control these distant regions, the Aksumite emperors established tributary kingdoms, collecting tribute and demanding submission from their leaders, and settled their most warlike loyal tribes among the border regions. Such precautions did not always produce the necessary results, however; each new emperor might have to spend some time reestablishing his control over his fractious subjects. Even at the height of Aksum's

power from the fourth through sixth centuries AD, the extent of Aksum's direct control is debatable: during the interminable wars of South Arabia, the Himyar people conquered Saba in the fifth century and although the Aksum emperors continued to call themselves kings "of Aksum and of Saba and of Himyar," for some time it was the Himyar who exercised real control over the peninsula, at least until Aksum sent another conquering army in 525.

By then, however, less than seventy-five years remained before Persia invaded Arabia, and in the seventh and eighth centuries Aksum's power vanished for good in the face of the Arabian invasions (previously, the aggression had been the other way around—an Aksumite army attacked Mecca itself in 570). These invaders carried Islam across the whole of Northern Africa and established deep cultural ties there with the Muslim Middle East; but in the former kingdom of Aksum, Christianity—in the Egyptian form called Coptic—retained its followers, and indeed still does.



Left: *Mani organized his followers into three groups. The first, the Elect lived ascetically devoting themselves to living as purely as possible, living ascetically, and by fasting on Sundays and Mondays. They ate mainly fruit and drank fruit juice. In the pursuit of redemption, the Elect was forbidden to eat or to uproot plants, to cut down any tree or kill any animal, and was obliged to follow complete sexual abstinence.*



# KONGO

The Kingdom of the Kongo, located in parts of what are now Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formed in the fourteenth century and gradually expanded to include six major principalities, each governed by a chief who owed tribute, taxes, and military assistance to the king (*manikongo*). The capital city, Mbanza Kongo, impressed the first Portuguese explorers in the late fifteenth century with its order and size: larger than any of the surrounding villages and towns, the concentration of manpower and wealth enabled the kingdom to maintain centralized authority, at least for some of the time.

A complicated social structure, which invested men with leadership positions like the kingship but reckoned status, inheritance, and kinship through the mother (a matrilineal system), plus a tradition of electing a king rather than monarchy being a straightforward inheritance, meant that power transitions from one king to the next rarely passed without trouble. In the end, this system failed when stressed by economic, social, and political destabilizing factors stemming from Portuguese interference, and one of Africa's most powerful precolonial kingdoms crumbled.

## THE SLAVE TRADE IN THE KONGO

The Portuguese hardly introduced slavery to the Kongo: there as elsewhere in Africa, slaves formed one part of a functioning society. Slavery was an offshoot of war: the word for “slave” in Kikongo (the Kongo language) also meant “war captive.” Yet certain Kongo laws protected these slaves (from, among other things, being sold to Europeans), and slaves could become full members of society through social procedures. With the arrival of the Portuguese, however, slavery became a major economic factor, as slaves quickly became the Kongo's most valuable export. Soon the Kongo nobility waged war solely to gain slaves to sell to the insatiable Portuguese, and the breaking of Kongo's own laws to sell protected Kongo slaves led to social destabilization.

The Portuguese indirectly caused political destabilization as well. Naturally the slave trade—and other commerce—occurred on the coast, with the result that coastal province of Soyo became wealthy and powerful enough to begin trading directly with the Portuguese, circumventing the power of the manikongo. Despite the fact that the manikongo was Catholic—the first to convert was João I in 1491—the Portuguese government paid no heed to the Kongo's pleas that they conduct themselves equitably and legally.



## DISSOLUTION

The most powerful manikongo in Kongo's history was probably Alfonso I (r. 1506 or 1509–1542), João I's son. Fluent and literate in Portuguese as well as Kikongo, Alfonso tried manfully to manage an unbalanced relationship with Portugal, with some success, even as he rebuilt the capital, expanded his borders, and converted his country to Catholicism.

After Alfonso's death, however, competing factions for the kingdom engaged in years of civil war and political maneuvering, enabling another people, the Jaga, to invade and briefly seize the capital in 1568. One manikongo contender, Álvaro I Nimi a Lukeni (1568–87), enlisted Portuguese aid against this new threat and in securing the throne, in return allowing them to create a colony (Angola) in a former Kongo province, Luanda. The age of colonialism had now truly begun, and the Portuguese had no intention of remaining the submissive partner in a relationship with the Kongo.

By 1622 the first Kongo-Angola war had broken out, but by then the Portuguese had firmly rooted themselves, utterly disrupted the Kongo economy, and considered the whole region their own. The matter was decided at the Battle of Mbila on October 29, 1665, in which the last manikongo was killed. Although Portugal did not fully take control until 1857, the power of the Kongo had been broken, and what was left of the country descended into social and economic stagnation punctuated by decades of civil war.

Above: A map of the Kongo (Congo) in 1617, Petrus Bertius.

Left: The King of Congo.



Above: Portrait of King John I of Portugal (1357–1433) He was called John the Good (sometimes John the Great) or John of Happy Memory.



# MUTAPA

When the Portuguese reached the southern edge of the African continent, they encountered an empire known as Matapa (Mutapa) or Mwene Matapa after the term for the emperor. At its height in the sixteenth century, the Mwene Matapa controlled an area from the Zambezi to the Limpopo Rivers, all the way to the Indian Ocean—in theory, at any rate. After a series of conquests from their base on the inland plateau, the Mwene Matapa enforced displays of submission with a 30,000-man army, drawing heavily on peasant conscripts. Considering that after the first blush of conquest, however, when the Mwene Matapa established his own relatives in positions of power over conquered territories, local leaders were still allowed to govern their own territories, the extent of the Mwene Matapa's real control is uncertain.



## Great Zimbabwe

Great Zimbabwe, the most remarkable of many stone building sites in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, includes an edifice known as the Great Enclosure, which is the largest ancient structure in eastern, western, central, or southern Africa. Inhabited from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, Great Zimbabwe presents many mysteries to Africa scholars: Who built it and why? Why was it abandoned and what meanings did the site's symbolic sculptures convey? What relationship existed between the rulers of Great Zimbabwe and the rulers of Matapa, who came to power concurrently with Great Zimbabwe's decline? One possible clue could be the fact that one way the Mwene Matapa demonstrated prestige and power was by building stone edifices, a practice that ended sometime in the sixteenth century.

Above right: *Mutapa Matope was the greatest Mutapa conqueror, subduing Tavara and Tonga in the fourteenth century AD*

Right: *A sixteenth century Portuguese map of Monomotapa in the interior of southern Africa. The Portuguese began to trade with the Matapa people in the mid-sixteenth century. They recorded a wealth of information about the Mutapa and gradually increased control over the kingdom until it became a vassal of the Portuguese Empire in 1629.*

## THE MATAPA EMPIRE

Nevertheless, when the Portuguese first arrived they exaggerated the power of the empire greatly, presumably out of ignorance and caution. During the sixteenth century, mostly autonomous kingdoms emerged in Manyika, Uteve, Barwe, and Danda, although their leaders apparently continued to display formal obeisance to the Mwene Matapa. Already by the early fifteenth century, however, the royal family was divided into two factions, whose vying for the kingship would last for a century and have dramatic repercussions.

Throughout the sixteenth century, the Mwene Matapa was powerful enough to demand hefty considerations from Portuguese traders: every year the Portuguese commander of the fort at Mozambique paid 1,000 crusados, while imported cloth was subject to a 50 percent tax. But in 1589 or so, when the Mwene Matapa named Nogomo Mpunzagutu died, things began to fall apart. The rival branch of the royal family then came to power, since Nogomo's son, Mavura, was still an infant. When he grew up, he challenged the Mwene Matapa, Kapararidze, by securing the backing of Portugal. In 1629 the Portuguese invaded, raided the capital, and established Mavura on the throne.

Mavura only held the north of the country, however (Kapararidze retained the south), and had no intention of abiding by the treaty he signed on May 24, 1629, acknowledging his vassalage to Portugal. While he bickered

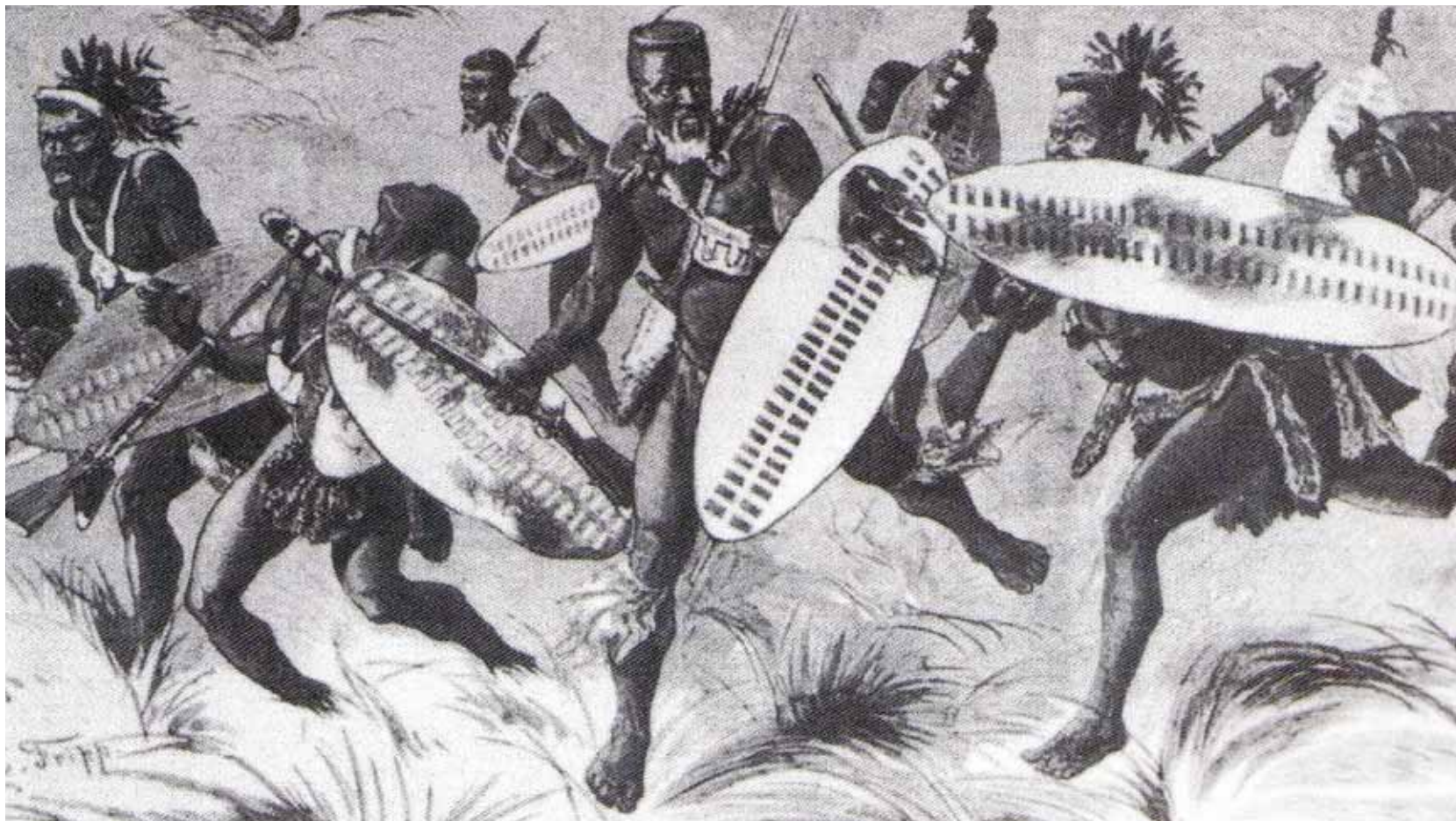
with the Portuguese about the details, Kapararidze launched a major raid through the country, establishing himself as the anti-Portuguese leader and nearly shunting Mavura into irrelevancy. Undaunted, Mavura again turned to Portugal, again raised an army, and again defeated Kapararidze. By the summer of 1633, Mavura was back on the throne but now wholly dependent on Portugal. It was left to the Rozwi Empire, founded by a Matapa rebel in the sixteenth century, to deal with the Portuguese. Changamire Dombo I (r. 1684–95), the greatest of the Rozwi emperors, threw the Portuguese settlers and traders out of the Zambezi valley in the 1690s and simultaneously took over Matapa itself.





# SHAKA

Perhaps the greatest of all precolonial African conquerors, Shaka of the Zulu, was born out of wedlock to Senzangakona, the son of a chieftain of the Zulu, and Nandi, from the eLangeni. His earliest years were spent among the Zulu, until his mother was expelled from the tribe when Shaka was only six. Until his was a teenager, he and his mother wandered from place to place. At that time there were two powerful clans in the region, the Ndwandwe and the Mthethwa, whose chief Dingiswayo took in the young Shaka and his mother. As was customary, Shaka joined Dingiswayo's army, where his tactical genius began to emerge.



## THE ZULU EMPIRE

When Shaka was about twenty-nine years old, his father Senzangakona died, and Dingiswayo spotted an opportunity. He sent Shaka to claim the chieftaincy, thus expanding his control over the Zulu at no real cost. The plan backfired. Shaka had not forgotten the abuses of his youth, and ruled the Zulu with an iron fist. He reorganized the army, introduced several important military innovations, and set about conquering his neighbors, spending a particularly brutal time avenging himself and his mother among the Langeni, until by 1818 his power threatened both Dingiswayo and Chief Zwide of the Ndwandwe, and his army had grown from a paltry 400 to perhaps 4,000 men.

Even so, when the Ndwandwe sent their first army against Shaka in 1818 they outnumbered him by at least two to one, but the Zulu chieftain defeated them roundly at the Battle of KwaGqoki in April. Shortly before this event, Dingiswayo had died. Shaka, seizing the same opportunity in reverse, propped his own man on the Mthethwa throne, thus taking over former Mthethwa lands. It was a shift in power that Zwide could not tolerate, and he sent a second army against the Zulu in 1819. At first Shaka fell back before them, but collected all foodstuffs as he went to drain the strength away from the Ndwandwe, whose warriors were accustomed to foraging and pillaging for sustenance. Shaka's retreat, however, was merely preparing a blow. His gathered strength, like a drawn arrow, punched through the Ndwandwe lines at the Battle of Mhlatuze River. The Ndwandwe army was smashed.

Shaka was now left virtually unopposed, but he continued conquering tribes west and south until he had forged a mighty empire. He ruled it autocratically, creating a centralized authority and establishing family members—including women—in control of local regions to ensure their loyalty. The campaigns of the Zulu created such havoc among the tribes of

southern Africa that the period is known as the *mfecane*, “the crushing.” Some peoples were wiped out altogether; others existed only in shattered remnants, having migrated to other areas; others fled before the Zulu, creating a domino effect of violence throughout the region that cost perhaps two million lives and left entire areas uninhabited (until European settlers arrived). Finally, Shaka's autocracy and brutality drove his half brothers to murder him, but the might of the Zulu Empire endured further conflicts until finally the British crushed it in 1879 (see page xx).

## THE HORNS OF THE BEAST: SHAKA'S ARMY

The emergence of the Zulu, one of the smaller and most insignificant clans before Shaka, owed itself almost wholesale to Shaka's military innovations. He organized the army by age group, so that members of any given tribe, including conquered tribesmen, were spread throughout the army; thus even at its maximum strength of 15,000 in the mid-1820s, no one section of the army ever posed a major threat to Shaka's rule. He also introduced new tactics: warriors had to run barefoot, for which they trained by walking on thorns, and learned to function in a four-pronged assault formation called *impondo zankomo*, “horns of the beast,” in which the main body would engage frontally while two “horns” would sweep around the enemy on either flank and a fourth unit of reservists would wait until needed. Shaka even introduced new weaponry, abandoning the traditional throwing spear for the assegai, a short stabbing spear with an eighteen-inch blade. With boys carrying supplies, a Zulu troop could cover up to fifty miles a day, making speed a fundamental part of Shaka's strategy. Repeated victories and the presence of Shaka's cattle (the primary source of wealth in Zulu society) kept morale high.



Above: Zulu Warrior Utimuni, nephew of Shaka, the Zulu king  
Top: Shaka honed his warriors by ordering them to dance on thorns. Those who exhibited signs of weakness were singled out for execution



# ZULU WARS

On January 6, 1879, British troops crossed into Zulu territory carrying an intolerable ultimatum for King Cetshwayo. Five days later, the ultimatum expired, and the last war fought by the Zulu nation began.

At its height under King Shaka (r. 1817–1828), the Zulu kingdom covered about 11,500 square miles, but gradually lost territory to internal dissension and especially external encroachment, in particular from Dutch settlers—known as Boers—and British colonists. By 1877, the former Dutch colonies of Natal and Transvaal had passed to British hands, leaving the Zulus surrounded by British imperialism, unable to play the two European powers off of each other as they had in the past. Britain’s High Commissioner of African colonies, Sir Henry Frere, aimed to conquer the Zulus, part of a grand economic, imperialist, and racist scheme for the region.



*Cetshwayo kaMpande(1826–1884) was the King of the Zulus from 1872 to 1879 and their leader during the Anglo Zulu war of 1879.*



### THE BATTLE OF ISANDLWANA

Using rather contemptible methods, Frere provoked a war, intending to finish it quickly before the British government even knew about it. Frere’s South African army numbered 20,000 (including African allies and reinforcements, sent after the war began) to Cetshwayo’s 40,000, but the British infantrymen were professional soldiers, armed with the latest weaponry, while the Zulus—although fierce warriors—fought mostly with spears and some antiquated guns, and were primarily farmers and herders.

On January 22, the main Zulu force of about 20,000 men surprised a force of about 1,700 British soldiers at Isandlwana. The surprise and the numerical advantage won the day; the Zulus decimated the British, confiscating their guns and artillery, and shocking the Empire. They had brought knives to a gunfight—and won. Unfortunately, news of the Zulu victory required immediate and overwhelming military action to salvage British pride.

### THE BATTLE OF ULUNDI

Despite the early victory, the Zulus were badly outmatched, and had been dismayed by the toll Isandlwana had taken on their forces (some 1,000 men). Over the next six months the Zulus and British forces clashed in many battles, most of them losses for the Zulu. Finally, on July 4, 1879, they engaged in one final all-out fight at Ulundi, Cetshwayo’s capital. The result was devastating. Unable to withstand the disciplined firing of British soldiers, nor outrun the British cavalry, the Zulu army of 20,000 lost some 1,500 men. The rest fled to their homes, where they resumed a nonmartial life. The British lost twelve men. The war had ended, and with it the Zulu nation: King Cetshwayo was captured on August 28 and sent into exile.



### The Defense of Rorke's Drift

Even as the British army suffered its embarrassing defeat at Isandlwana, a garrison of no more than 150 men—some of them ill—began one of the most incredible survival stories in military history. Left to defend the supply depot of Rorke’s Drift (left), the garrison soldiers faced a Zulu army of as many as 4,000 warriors. All through the afternoon and night of January 22–23 the Zulus attacked, nearly managing to overrun the defense, but again and again the British garrison repelled them. Reinforcements arrived the next morning, relieving the exhausted garrison and soundly defeating the Zulus. By the end of the battle somewhere between 370 and 600 Zulus had been killed. Only seventeen British soldiers had died—although nearly every survivor was wounded.



*Top left: The Battle of Isandlwana in January 1879 was the first major encounter in the Anglo-Zulu War and an embarrassing defeat for the British Empire. Top: The Battle of Ulundi in July 1879 was the last major conflict of the Anglo-Zulu War. The British defeated the main Zulu army and then burned the capital of Zululand, the royal kraal of Ulundi.*

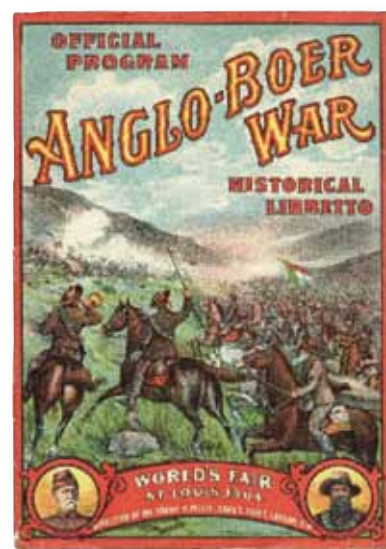
Major Engagements		
Battle	Date (1879)	Victor
Isandlwana	January 22	Zulu
Rorke's Drift	January 22–23	British
Hlobane	March 28	Zulu
Khambula	March 29	British
Gingindlovu	April 2	British
Siege of Eshowe	February 11–April 3	British
Ulundi	July 4	British



# BOER WARS

In 1877, Britain annexed the small, insular state of the South African Republic, better known as the Transvaal, as part of a series of land grabs in southern Africa following the discovery of diamonds and in accordance with Britain's unapologetic imperialism, which sought, in the words of Cecil Rhodes, diamond magnate and prime minister of Cape Colony (1890–96), to establish a swath of British dominance “from the Cape to Cairo.”

The Boers—the Dutch-speaking descendants of settlers who had lived in Africa since the seventeenth century—revolted, and despite the fact that they were farmers while the British fielded a professional army, they won victories at Laing's Nek, Ingogo, and finally ending the First Boer War, at the Battle of Majuba Hill (February 27, 1881). The Transvaal recovered its independence, but the British maintained a very vaguely defined “suzerainty” over it. The matter might have rested there, but in 1886 gold was found in the Transvaal.



*Anglo-Boer War program sold at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, Missouri*



## OVER BY CHRISTMAS

The resulting gold rush spawned the town of Johannesburg and drew settlers from all over the world. Called *uitlanders* (outlanders), these new inhabitants were decidedly unwelcome, and the Transvaal government taxed them heavily while denying them voting rights. Cecil Rhodes conspired to overthrow the Transvaal government. The attempt, known as the Jameson Raid, failed spectacularly and sparked a war.

Joined by its fellow Boer nation, the Orange Free State, the Transvaal invaded the British-held Cape and Natal on October 11, 1899. The British felt complacent, with many predicting the war would end before Christmas. Once again they were surprised. By January 1900 the Boers had won five battles and besieged three towns, but the war was far from over. In February British reinforcements arrived and began to recover ground. On March 13 the Boer city of Bloemfontein fell; on June 5 the capital, Pretoria, followed. Yet still the war did not end. The business turned ugly; the Boers fought a desperate guerrilla war while Britain instigated a “scorched-earth” policy, burning farmland, razing homes, and slaughtering livestock. By one British estimate, at least 30,000 houses were ruined; in the Orange Free State alone more than 5,000 farms burned. For the first time in history, the British placed tens of thousands of civilians in concentration camps, where many died from malnutrition and poor conditions.

Finally, on May 31, 1902, the last fighting Boers surrendered and the war came to a close. The British had fielded 450,000 soldiers (against 60,000–87,000 Boers) and lost 22,000. Boer casualties numbered about seven or eight thousand—but Boer civilian deaths ranged between eighteen and twenty-five thousand, while African deaths numbered around 12,000. Britain had won—but the Boers retained the right to self-governance and to manage “native affairs,” which had enormous consequences for the future of South Africa.



## “No End of a Lesson”

In the words of British poet and author Rudyard Kipling, Queen Victoria's realm had received “no end of a lesson” at the hands of the determined Boer resistance fighters. Kipling's words were truer than perhaps even he realized, for the Second Boer War inaugurated many of the weapons, policies, and tactics that would later dominate warfare of the twentieth century. By the end of the Boer War, gone were the red-uniformed, organized units of the former British army; gone was the officer, mounted and bedecked, rallying his men to charge from the front line. Instead of the traditional sword, officers carried handguns; insignia and bright clothing vanished under the pressures of guerrilla warfare and excellent Boer marksmanship. New on the battlefield were telephones and searchlights, barbed wire and trench warfare; off the battlefield concentration camps made their ignominious debut. It was the last war of the Victorian era, and introduced warfare to the modern age.

*Top: Map of South Africa after the Kaffir and Boer Wars showing the political position in 1899 and the territory embraced in the Union of South Africa 1910 (outlined in pink).*

*Above left: The British had learned a hard lesson in the First Boer War and returned in 1899 with improved firepower. New artillery included twelve powerful Howitzer guns.*

*Left: King Street, Toronto: the British Empire celebrates victory in 1902.*



# FIRST ITALO-ETHIOPIAN WAR

Italy became a united nation in 1861 and so came late to the “Scramble for Africa,” a race by European imperialists to colonize Africa. France, England, Germany, and others had already snapped up much of the richest territory—but Italy set her sights on the western shores of the Red Sea. Italy established two colonies, Eritrea and Somalia, but one nation stood in the way of true dominance: the Empire of Ethiopia.



Top: Menelik II (1844–1913), Emperor of Ethiopia, with rifles supplied by the French. He was always eager to embrace new technology in his quest to modernize Ethiopia.

Center: Italian troops in Ethiopia, 1896.

Above: Oreste Baratieri (1841–1901) was governor of Eritrea and led the Italian army in the First Italo-Ethiopian War. He vowed to bring Menelik back to Italy in a cage.

Right: In February 1896, Baratieri led an army of 17,700 men into battle at Adowa where his forces were outnumbered by six to one. Italy was forced to sign the Treaty of Addis Ababa guaranteeing Ethiopian sovereignty.

## LOST IN TRANSLATION

On May 2, 1889, Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II signed the Treaty of Wuchale with Italy, recognizing Italy's possession of Eritrea and establishing an international boundary. However, the language of one of the treaty's clauses differed between the Amharic text and the Italian. In Amharic the treaty allowed Ethiopia the option of utilizing Italian authorities in diplomatic relationships; in Italian the clause forced Ethiopia to do so. In other words, by the Italian terms of the treaty Ethiopia had now become an Italian protectorate.

Unsurprisingly, tensions between the two powers mounted rapidly. In 1893, Menelik II denounced the treaty; two years later, he mobilized his army. The Italians won an early victory at Coatit on January 14, 1895, and pushed forward, fortifying positions and occupying towns, including one named Makalla. A small force of native soldiers and Italian officers set out from Makalla and was surprised by the vanguard of the Ethiopian army at Amba Alagi on December 7, 1895. Since Coatit, the Ethiopians had received enormous numbers of guns, ammunition, and rifles from France, Italy's colonial rival. Amba Alagi—which pitted 20,000 Ethiopians against 2,000 Italian-led African levies—ended in disaster for the Italians, but the following siege of Makalla was worse yet and the town surrendered on January 20, 1896.

## THE BATTLE OF ADOWA

After Makalla, Menelik II's army took up fortified positions above the town of Adowa. The region was rugged and mountainous, and the Italians, operating under the command of General Oreste Baratieri, governor of Eritrea, suffered from dangerous supply routes, inaccurate maps, and double agents secretly informing the Ethiopians. Baratieri, misinformed by

one of these spies, sent out his 17,000-member force in four battalions to attack the Ethiopians, who were supposedly abandoning their positions. Instead, on March 1, 1896, he ran into the full might of the Ethiopian army, prepared, determined, and 120,000 strong.

Baratieri's plan went wrong right from the start. He intended his four columns, commanded by generals Dabormida on the right flank, Albertone on the left, Arimondi in the center, and Ellena in reserve, to take positions around Mount Bellah the night before March 1. But the map they used had been incorrectly drawn, and Albertone ended up two miles away from his intended position, exposed far ahead of the front. A large, unorganized mass of Ethiopian soldiers fell upon them, urged on, despite heavy Italian artillery fire, by Menelik's empress, the redoubtable Taitu. General Dabormida attempted to come to the rescue, but took a wrong turn in the mountainous, mazelike terrain and ended up two miles away, directly in the path of another Ethiopian advance. There, Dabormida managed to hold his own, but after the utter destruction of Albertone's column, cut down as it attempted to retreat, the Ethiopians were able to capitalize on the divided Italian army, swarming each column separately.

Losses on both sides were heavy, with Menelik losing about 17,000 to death and wounds, but for Italy—and, in a way, Europe as a whole—Adowa was an utter catastrophe. Beyond the casualty count, a sickening 10,000 wounded, captured, or killed out of 17,000, Adowa ended Italian hopes in the region for several decades and, more, demonstrated after four centuries of colonialism that native Africans could defeat the invading Europeans.





## THE SECOND ITALO-ETHIOPIAN WAR

Italy smarted from the disastrous Battle of Adowa for forty years. By then, the fascist Benito Mussolini had snatched Italy's reins; he forced his country into becoming a model of efficiency, knit the fractious Italian society into a working whole, and instituted many social reforms—achievements that earned him accolades around the world. Mussolini had not given up on the dream of an Italian Empire, however, and Ethiopia was first on his list. Meanwhile, in 1916 a young man named Tafari Makonnen deposed the emperor of Ethiopia (unpopular for his Muslim religion in a Christian-majority country) and became Haile Selassie I. An ambitious and effective leader, Haile Selassie resented the European presence in East Africa nearly as much as Italy resented its defeat in 1896.

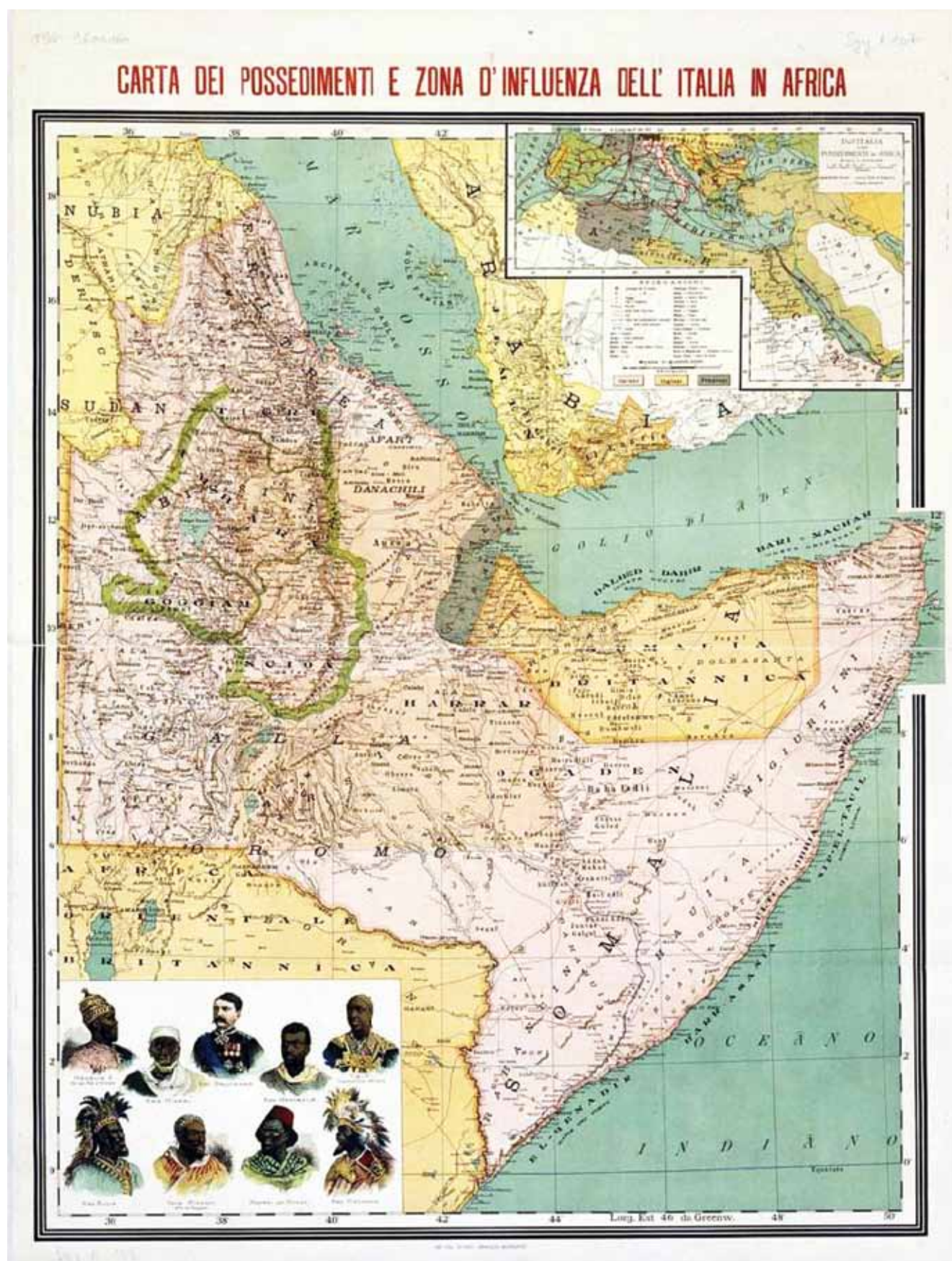
In December of 1934, Ethiopian troops attacked an Italian military outpost at the Wal-Wal oasis, whose wells provided crucial water. Although clearly within Ethiopian borders, the wells lay near enough to the poorly defined boundary with Italian Somaliland that Italy had been able to quietly take them over. The border clash, involving about 1,500 Ethiopians and 600 Italian colonials, might have remained one of history's minor footnotes, except for Mussolini's simmering resentment and grandiose vision of a restored Roman Empire.

## MUSSOLINI'S REVENGE

After months of posturing and failed arbitrations, Mussolini invaded Ethiopia from both Italian Somaliland and Eritrea in the fall of 1935. Ethiopia's 900,000 defenders outnumbered Italy's 300,000 invasion troops, but Haile Selassie, relying on the League of Nations to rein Italy in, mobilized late, issuing the order only after the Italians crossed the border. (Also, despite efforts to modernize, his army suffered from a great technological disadvantage.) As a result, the two-pronged invasion force swept through Ethiopia with ease, using poison gas and far superior air power to crush Ethiopian resistance. The emperor was forced to flee the country on May 2, 1936; Adowa fell with barely a whimper. For the next five years Italian troops occupied Ethiopia, despite guerilla efforts to dislodge them. Italy was avenged.



Above: *Italian forces celebrating mass on Raeyo Mountain in Ethiopia in 1896 before the fateful Battle of Adowa that ended the First Italo-Ethiopian War.*



Left: *Map Showing Italian territories in Africa 1896. By 1914, Italy had annexed Eritrea, Somalia, Libya, and the Dodecanese Islands, although it was thwarted in its attempt to conquer Ethiopia.*

## The League of Nations

The brainchild of American President Woodrow Wilson (1913–21), the League of Nations was formed after World War I as an international community dedicated to resolving conflicts peaceably between league members and providing a common defense. Emperor Haile Selassie's expectation that the League could arbitrate successfully between Italy, a founding member, and Ethiopia, a member since 1923, were frustrated in part by the League's determination to avoid another major conflict like World War I. Thus, even though all League members labeled Italy the aggressor in the Ethiopian conflict, their economic sanctions did not prohibit exports of oil—a truly critical resource they feared would drive Europe into war. Only Germany, led by Mussolini's fellow fascist Adolph Hitler, supported the invasion of Ethiopia. Their World War II alliance was thus heralded by the "Ethiopian crisis," while the League's ineffective arbitrations helped cripple the institution. The League of Nations ceased to function during World War II, the very conflict it had been established to prevent, but birthed a successor organization, the United Nations, in 1946.



# WORLD WAR II AFRICAN THEATER

Nearly forty years after the fact, Italy was still smarting from its humiliating defeat by Ethiopia at the Battle of Adowa (1886). Having already repressed Somali resistance to fascist rule (1923–1927) and mopped up resistance left over from World War I in Libya (by 1932), Italian dictator Benito Mussolini turned vengeful eyes on Ethiopia and in a swift, seven-month campaign, finally conquered the country (1935–36). This campaign is sometimes called the first act of—or prelude to—World War II.



Above: *Born Tafari Makonnen, Haile Selassie I (189–1975) was King of Ethiopia from 1916 to 1930 and Emperor from 1930 to 1974. He was revered by his people as a messianic figure destined to lead his people to a new golden age.*

## CAMPAIGNS IN AFRICA

When Italy officially joined the war on the Axis side, it controlled Libya, Eritrea, Ethiopia (Abyssinia), and Italian Somaliland. To the Allies, this situation not only threatened their own African possessions but also the vital water route between the Mediterranean and Red Seas via the Suez Canal.

Despite Mussolini's posturing, the conquests of the 1920s and 1930s had left the Italian army in relatively poor shape. Nevertheless, at first they had some success, advancing into Kenya and the Sudan and conquering British Somaliland in August 1940 and the northern Egyptian towns of Sollum and Sidi Barrani in September. Then the Italians began to fall apart. The Allies, primarily British troops and Ethiopians—led by their emperor, Haile Selassie, who had been forced to escape his own country in 1936—retook Ethiopia in May 1941. Eritrea fell in June; both British and Italian Somaliland were in British hands by November. In Northern Africa, British troops had driven the Italians back across Egypt and Libya all the way to El Agheila.

Top right: *British infantry attacking in the Second Battle of El Alamein (October 1942). The Allied victory marked a major turning point in the Western Desert Campaign.*



Above: *Italian prisoners captured in the assault on Libya in 1941 march to British concentration camps.*

Right: *Prisoners at El Alamein 1942, the First Battle of El Alamein (July 1942) halted the second (and final) advance by the Axis forces into Egypt.*



## THE DESERT FOX

Germany now came to the aid of its beleaguered ally, first rescuing Mussolini from an attempted military coup in January 1941, then sending a small, 15,000-man corps with about 50 anti-tank guns and 140 tanks to Libya. Commanding Afrika Korps, as it was called, was a brilliant colonel named Erwin Rommel. Rommel and his corps arrived in Tripoli in February 1941, blessed by the coincidence that at the moment of their arrival some 60,000 British troops were leaving North Africa for Greece. Rommel took the offensive on March 24. By the end of April he had advanced as far as Sollum and had besieged the fortress at Tobruk.

Rommel's ability to maneuver and supply his troops in the harsh Libyan Desert, with a supply line stretching from Tripoli (at a maximum of 1,300 miles, it was more than six times the conventional extreme), became legendary, earning him the nickname, "the Desert Fox."

In November 1941 Allied troops responded. They chased the Desert Fox all the way back to El Agheila by the end of December (Axis forces held onto Bardia and Sollum for another month). But on January 21 the dance began again. In this second offensive Rommel truly achieved fame, breaking the Gazala–Bir Hakeim defensive line in June and capturing Tobruk—where Britain had stashed large amounts of equipment—on June 21, 1942. With these successes Rommel was promoted to field marshal.



Above: *Known as "the Desert Fox", Erwin Rommel (1891–1944) won the respect of friend and foe for his skilful leadership of German and Italian forces in the North African campaign and his humane treatment of prisoners.*





## OPERATION TORCH

On July 25, 1942, Great Britain and the United States labeled their first major joint operation in World War II "Torch." The Americans had pressed for an assault on occupied France, across the British Channel, but Britain had convinced President Roosevelt that such an attempt could not yet succeed. They felt Africa was more vulnerable: it would force the Axis to divert resources from the Eastern Front, threaten Mussolini's Italy directly, and (if successful) reopen the Mediterranean to shipping. Although Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia had all been French colonies, their governments supported the Axis-supported government of occupied France at Vichy, placing Allied movements in North Africa at risk from treacherous members of the populace as well as German and Italian troops.

On November 8, 1942, Allied forces landed at several locations throughout Morocco and Algeria in a coordinated assault, and indeed the landing troops had first to overcome French resistance. Thanks to a *coup d'état* in Algiers and an arrangement with the Vichy High Commissioner for North Africa, this resistance was shortlived: by November 11 the French forces had switched sides. Now the Allies began to press east, scoring a major victory on January 23, 1943, when they took Tripoli.

## RUNNING THE FOX TO GROUND

Even before the landings of Operation Torch, British forces commanded by Bernard Law Montgomery attacked Rommel at el-Alamein. Fought from October 23 to November 3, 1942, the battle marked the beginning of the Allied victory in Africa. Rommel retreated to the Mareth Line in Tunisia (originally built by the French), which became the last stand for Axis power in North Africa. Axis reinforcements turned the back-and-forth battle for Africa quite bloody, but ultimately did precisely what Great Britain had hoped: even tactical Axis victories meant a strategic loss because Germany drained manpower to fight the wars in Africa that it needed in Europe.

Rommel launched one more major counterattack from his position in Tunisia, striking through Gafsa and Freiana, while other German commanders drove the Allies back through Faïd Pass. At Kassarine Pass, however, the Allied lines held and captured Faïd, and on February 22 Rommel abandoned the attempt to secure Allied supplies over the mountains for one last thrust at Montgomery at Medenine, engaging him on March 6. Overcome there, the Germans again were put on the defensive. Soon Allied forces were surrounding the Germans, reduced to holding Tunis. Finally, on May 7, 1943, the city fell to the Allies. On May 13 the last German troops in North Africa surrendered: the long battle for Africa was over.

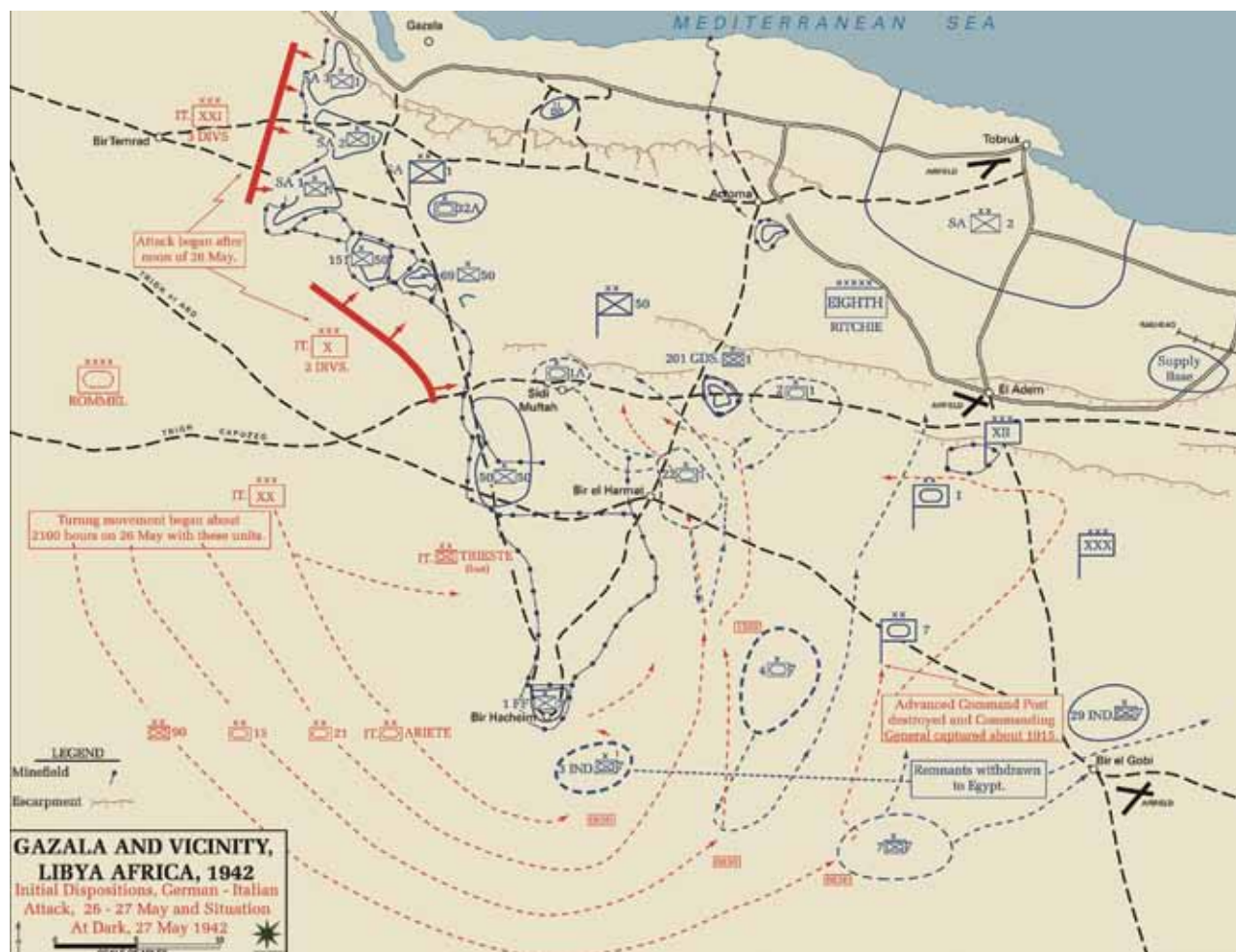
## Africa in World War I

The continent of Africa was no stranger to world war. Indeed, native African involvement in World War II was far lower than in World War I, when more than two million joined, or were forced into, what was essentially a European war. By 1914, with the exceptions of Ethiopia and Liberia, European countries had colonized every part of Africa. Germany's claims were relatively few, holding only Togo, German Cameroon, German South West Africa, and German East Africa. Since these were scattered, the Allies—frequently serving imperialist designs of their own—had little trouble in Togo (overrun in nineteen days) but a bit more in South West Africa and Cameroon (which surrendered in 1915 and 1916 respectively).

In East Africa, however, the Allies hit a major snag in the person of Lieutenant Colonel Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck. He enjoyed immediate success in 1914, fending off an assault on Tanga port, and though driven out of the cities led the Allies on an exhausting jungle chase that lasted, incredibly, two weeks past the close of the European theater. Lettow-Vorbeck faced at least 160,000 troops with only about 14,000 of his own men, and although some recent historians have challenged his reputation as a guerilla fighter *extraordinaire*, he certainly became an expert in bush fighting. Even more remarkably, perhaps, he retained the loyalty of his native African soldiers, who made up nearly 80 percent of his forces, throughout the war.

Top left: *Erwin Rommel surrounded by other German and Italian officers in North Africa, 1942.*

Top right: *British Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery, 1st Viscount Montgomery of Alamein (1887–1976). He commanded the 8th Army from August 1942 until the final Allied victory in Tunisia.*



Left: Map showing position of troops in the Battle of Gazala, Libya, in May 1942. The British line ran about 40 miles south from the Mediterranean coast, defended by extensive mine fields against attack from any direction.



# ALGERIAN WAR

By the mid-twentieth century the long age of European colonialism was coming to a close, but the end did not always arrive peacefully. In Algeria, full-scale war broke out in a conflict considered by many to be the prime example of colonial rebellion.



Top right: Barricades set up in January 1960 during the Algerian War of Independence. The banner reads “Vive Massu”. Above: In March 1954 Ahmed Ben Bella, an ex-sergeant in the French army, joined other Algerian exiles in Egypt to form a revolutionary committee that later became known as the National Liberation

## TERRORISM AND TORTURE

France had operated Algeria as a colony since 1830. By the 1950s the so-called *pieds noir*—Algerians with European roots and largely Catholic in faith—numbered about 1.2 million, and were accustomed to having the political and economic upper hand. The rest of the country, some 8 million, were black, poor, generally illiterate, and Muslim.

Events in Algeria were influenced by the victory, half a world away, of Indochina over France at Dien Bien Phu on May 7, 1954. France, whose reputation had already suffered during World War II, appeared vulnerable. On the night before November 1, 1954, members of the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) began a guerrilla war, hitting targets in Batna, Constantine, Aurés, and the capital, Algiers. France hardly noticed this opening act of war, but soon armed resistance to French rule spread to the Aurés Mountains and Little Kabylia. The *pieds noir* thwarted all government attempts to grant some measure of independence.

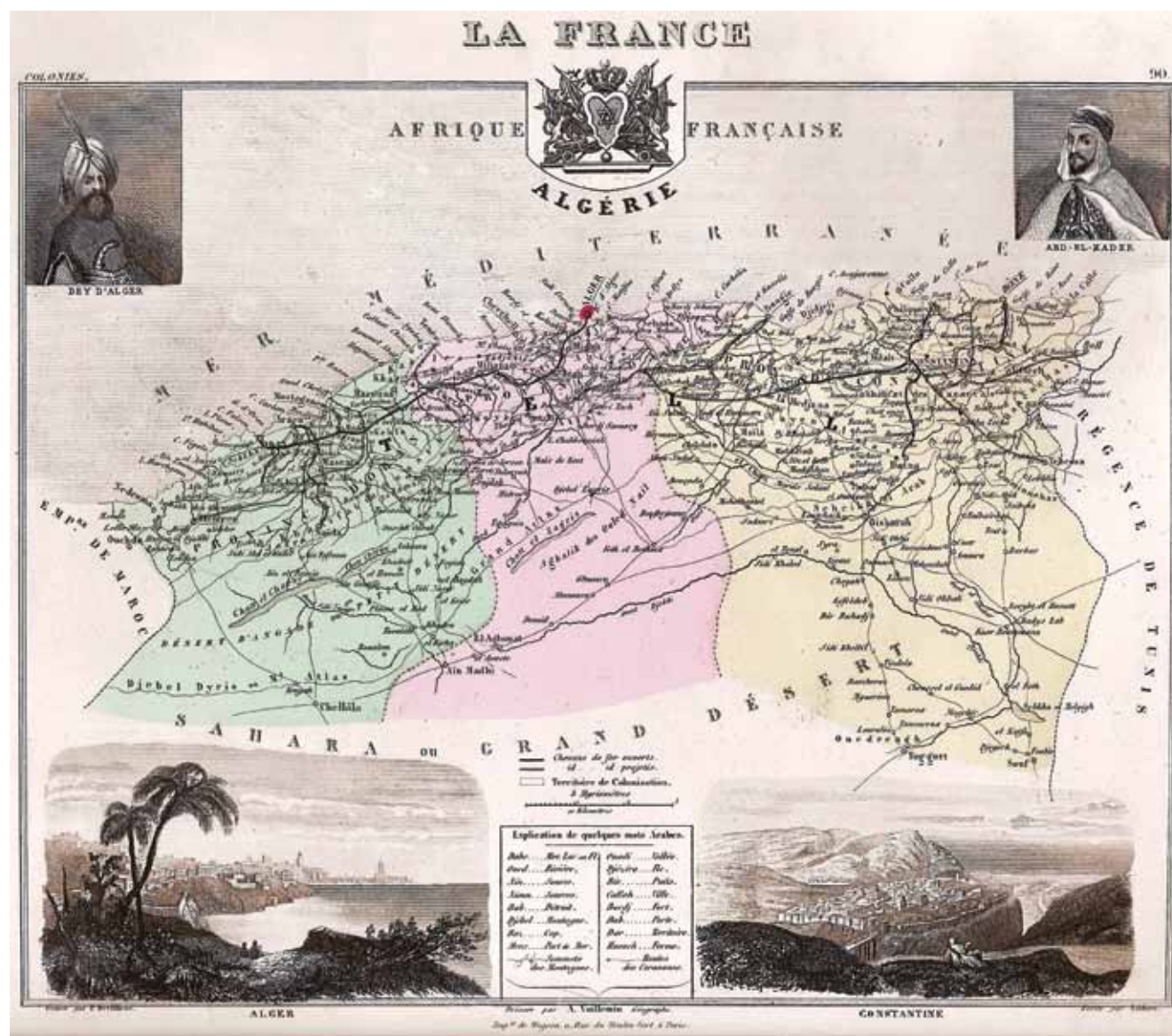
Then, in August 1955, FLN members massacred some 120 *pieds noir* and moderate Muslims in Philippeville; up to 12,000 Muslims died in retaliation (French army reports put the number closer to 1,200). France erected barricades along the borders with Morocco and Tunisia, attempting to prevent supplies from reaching the FLN. Faced with hardening resistance, the French army “relocated” one million Muslims to

internment camps, began to employ torture and random killings in villages suspected of harboring terrorists, and conscripted two million soldiers. France directed all her energy on Algeria, even freeing Morocco and Tunisia of all residual colonial obligations—naturally, this stiffened Algerian determination even more.

## INDEPENDENCE

During the Battle of Algiers, from September 3, 1956, to September 24, 1957, the FLN carried out bloody attacks throughout the city. Meanwhile, the French government was in turmoil, hobbled by the *pieds noir*. Angry at the continuing violence, they rioted on May 13, 1958. Led by a former general, they insisted on the return of Charles de Gaulle, a greatly respected war hero, to power. De Gaulle inaugurated France’s Fifth Republic, complete with a rewritten constitution, but he disappointed the *pieds noir* and declared his support for Algerian independence. An attempted coup in April of 1961 failed. Negotiations languished for the next year while violence escalated once again; finally, on March 18, 1962, the countries declared peace. France found itself in the odd position of having won the war militarily but losing it diplomatically; Algeria had won its independence, at a cost of 15,000 dead French soldiers and as many as 500,000 dead Muslim Algerians.

Right: Map of Algeria under French rule.



Above: Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970) founded the French Fifth Republic and granted independence to Algeria.



# CIVIL WARS

Untangling the factors behind apparently endemic violence in postcolonial Africa is a difficult and contentious task: possible culprits include colonial governments and foreign border alignment, ethnic divides, religious divides, tribalism, international trade agreements taking advantage of African countries, and continued exploitation by foreign corporations. Some of the worst of Africa's postcolonial civil wars, in which some or all of these factors may have played a part, include those in Angola, Somalia, and Sierra Leone. (For Rwanda's civil war, see pages xxx.)

## ANGOLA

In the middle of suppressing three different pro-independence groups in Angola, Portugal faced a crisis at home, and fell to a military coup in 1974. The new government simply abandoned Angola to its own devices, leaving it at the mercy of the three independence groups: the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). The first, a communist organization, enjoyed support from the Soviet Union and Cuba, which sent a total of 50,000 troops to Angola by 1988 (when it then agreed to withdraw them), while the United States and South Africa supported UNITA. FNLA, initially joined with UNITA when the two groups set up a government in Huambo (MPLA controlled Luanda, the capital), eventually faded into irrelevance.

Intense fighting nearly destroyed the country, halting in 1991 when both sides agreed to an election. However, when MPLA's candidate won, UNITA began a guerrilla war, until the MPLA leader was killed in 2002. A peace agreement was signed that April and UNITA disarmed in August, bringing the decades-long war to a close. Half a million had died in the violence and more than four million, out of a total population of twelve million, were displaced.



Top: Somali camp in the Eritrean desert where refugees live in limbo, waiting for the opportunity to return to their homelands. Many of the children who live in the camp were born there and have never seen Somalia.

Above: Somalia is ranked as one of the world's poorest and most violent countries, plagued by warring militias, famine, bandits, warlords and pirates. Militias fight among themselves for control of local territories.



## SOMALIA

In 1978, an attempted military coup fatally weakened the Somali government, itself the product of a military coup (in 1969), and the country fractured along traditional clan lines. The primary combatants were the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) and the Somali National Movement (SNM), leaving the government in charge of only a besieged capital, Mogadishu. When the government finally collapsed in 1991, the disintegration of the country into various clan groups accelerated: one even declared independence altogether. Repeated efforts at peace brokered by other African countries as well as the United Nations finally produced a government in 2004, although for two years it had to convene outside its own country. The government, increasingly under pressure from militant Islamic groups, has not been able to fully secure the country or halt the proliferation of pirates operating from the Somali coast. Since 2007, troops from the African Union have been engaged in peacekeeping operations.

## SIERRA LEONE

Unlike Angola, Sierra Leone witnessed an organized transition from a British colony to an independent republic (within the Commonwealth of Nations), but Sierra Leone too fell prey to militarism, political agitation, and finally a brutal civil war. A rebel group called the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), supported by Liberia's president Charles Taylor (convicted of war crimes in 2012), fought the government, led from 1992 to 1996 by Captain Valentine E. M. Strasser, who seized power in a military coup only to lose it in another coup, itself followed by yet another coup in 1997. After several false starts, a peace agreement with the RUF began to bear fruit in 2001: the civil war officially ended the following year.

## Blood Diamonds

Various regions in Africa are rich in precious minerals such as gold and diamonds, which in centuries past formed the basis for grand empires and wealthy kingdoms like Ghana and Mali but in recent years have been used to prevent stable state formation. In 2000, the United Nations defined the term "conflict diamonds," also known as blood diamonds, to describe the gems mined by rebels and traded for weapons. Blood diamonds were mined (and in some cases still are) along the southern coast of West Africa, in Southern Africa, and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in Angola. Sold in Western Europe, the diamonds pay for weapons used in insurgency efforts and civil wars.

Top left: *Delivering wheat to Somalia. A United States initiative, code-named Operation Restore Hope, aims to create a protected environment for conducting humanitarian operations in the southern half of Somalia.*

Left: *A burned out tank in Hargeisi, Somalia. Over 20 years of civil war has led to the devastation of many Somali cities, and the situation has been intensified by drought and famine.*

Below: *With the threat of drought and famine ever present, children in Mogadishu often face famine or are kidnapped or coerced to join militias.*





# RWANDAN CIVIL WAR

On October 1, 1990, rebel fighters operating from within Uganda and calling themselves the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RFP) invaded Rwanda. It was the first act of a civil war that, although it officially ended in August 1993, has since spawned more wars, regional conflicts, and a horrific genocide, with unrest continuing today.

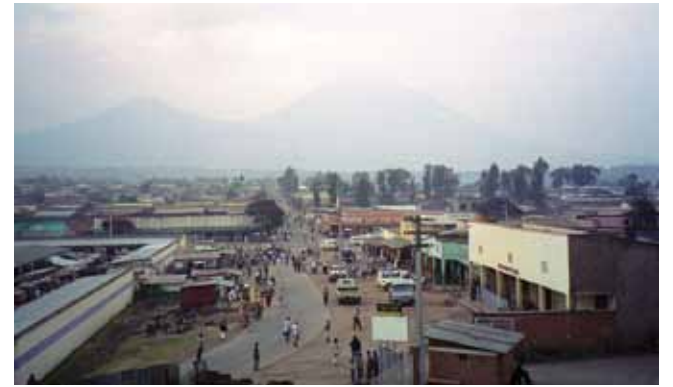


Above: *Juvénal Habyarimana (1937–1994) was the third President of Rwanda, a position he held longer than any other president to date, from 1973 until his assassination in 1994, which ignited ethnic tensions in the region.*

## PRELUDES

From 1916 to 1962, Belgium controlled Rwanda through the governing system already in place, which was dominated by the Tutsi people. The Tutsi made up about 15 percent of the population, while the overwhelming majority of Rwandans are Hutu (a third ethnicity, the Twa, comprise only 1 percent). At first Belgium supported Tutsi control, even hardening ethnic divisions and preaching Tutsi superiority in Catholic schools, but by the time a revolution broke out in 1959, Belgium had changed its mind and supported the Hutu revolutionaries. The 1960 election transferred nearly all power to Grégoire Kayibanda, a Hutu from the south; by 1967, 300,000 Tutsi had fled, many to neighboring Uganda, and another 20,000 had been killed. In 1973 another Hutu, Juvénal Habyarimana, an officer in the Rwandan army, overthrew the government and began a long reign.

Above right: *The RFP staged a night attack on the city of Ruhengeri, opening the gates of Ruhengeri prison, and engaging in heavy looting activity in the city. A reported 400 people were forced out of their homes to help carry the plunder and were later massacred.*



## CIVIL WAR

In the late 1980s, Habyarimana's rule—peaceful, if autocratic—faltered under worsening economic conditions. Under pressure to democratize his government, Habyarimana made some motions to do so, but moved too slowly to satisfy his people. Meanwhile, descendants of the Tutsi who had fled in the 1960s, now members of the Ugandan army, took matters into their own hands. On October 1, 1990, the RFP crossed the border at Kagitumba and marched south, reaching as far as Gabiro before the Rwandan army (FAR), supported by France and Zaïre, could respond. Faced with superior forces and weaponry supplied by France, the RFP, led by Paul Kagame, fell back to the high, dangerous slopes of the Virunga Mountains.

On January 23, 1991, Kagame led a surprise attack on Ruhengeri. The RFP was too small to wage a conventional war or to hold the city: they freed the prison inmates (many of them Tutsi and political prisoners), seized guns, ammunition, and supplies, and retreated again to the mountains. For the next thirty months they waged a guerilla war, on one occasion nearly reaching the capital, Kigali. Hundreds of thousands of people, fleeing the violence, became displaced; FAR-trained *interhamwe*, groups of armed Hutu civilians, carried out acts of retribution against their Tutsi neighbors. Finally, a peace was signed on August 4, 1993.





## GENOCIDE

Unfortunately the reforms promised by the government did not materialize and Hutu sentiment hardened against the Tutsi in general, not only against the RFP. Then, on April 6, 1994, unknown persons shot down Habyarimana's plane near Kigali Airport. The assassination sparked a genocide of Tutsi by *interhamwe* and a similar organization, the *impuzamugambi*, in collusion with FAR; the genocide prompted a renewal of the civil war. The effects of this double war on the country were devastating.

By the time the RFP seized control of Kigali in July, at least 800,000 people, including moderate Hutus as well as Tutsis, had died and another two million had fled the country, most into Zaïre. Gang rape, deliberate dissemination of HIV/AIDS, brutal methods of killing, and wide-scale displacement traumatized the country. Large refugee camps formed, both within Rwanda and outside its borders; many controlled by former FAR members and other Hutu extremists. The refugees, subject to further brutalization and killings, also suffered from poor sanitation, starvation, and illness.

## VIOLENCE SPREADS

Pro-Hutu elements in Zaïre, including President Mobutu, perpetrated horrors against Tutsi refugees and launched raids over the border. In 1996 Rwanda invaded, scattering their own refugees as well as their tormentors. In 1997 Rwandan forces, joined by Ugandan forces, overthrew the Zaïre government and replaced the president with the rebel Laurent-Désiré Kabila, who changed the name of the country to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This First Congo War was quickly followed by the Second Congo War, which began in 1998 after Kabila tried to distance himself from his former allies.

Rwanda and Uganda invaded again, this time in support of a different rebel group. The conflict roared out of control, drawing in so many different nations that it has sometimes been called Africa's World War. The war lasted until 2003 and killed between 4 and 5.4 million people; what had started as an ethnic conflict in one of Africa's smallest countries had sparked a continental upheaval. Today, although no official war troubles Central Africa, the region remains destabilized, impoverished, and at pervasive risk of renewed violence.



Above: *Joseph Mobutu (1930–1997) (left) was President of Zaire, later the Democratic Republic of Congo. When the Zairian atrocities escalated in 1996, Tutsi militias rebelled and the First Congo War began.*



Top: *The humanitarian relief effort in Rwanda was undermined by the presence among the refugees of many of the Interahamwe who carried out the genocide, and who used the refugee camps as bases to launch further attacks.*

Above: *The Genocide Memorial center in Butare, Rwanda. It houses many artifacts that are graphic and poignant reminders of the atrocities committed in Rwanda.*

Left: *Squalid refugee camps were filthy and overcrowded; many people succumbed to illness and starvation. Many more were brutalized by extremists who took control of the camps.*



# PROTESTERS SPARK CHANGE

In January 2011, popular protests in Tunisia forced the dictatorial and corrupt president, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, to resign from office and flee the country after several violent clashes between protesters and government forces. The uprising sparked a wave of similar protests throughout North African and Middle Eastern dictatorships in a far-flung movement known as the Arab Spring.



## A RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS

Protests had started in Egypt in December 2010 but intensified dramatically after Tunisia's success; by mid-February President Hosni Mubarak had been forced out. Similar protests soon began elsewhere in the Arab world, including Libya, Yemen, and Syria. The movement left no Arab country untouched; leaders of some nearby nations tried to preempt the protesters by offering reforms before the "Arab Spring" could overtake them, but unrest still simmers in some of these places, most notably Algeria. Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, and others, however, may have successfully navigated the troubled waters.

## YEMEN AND SYRIA

Not all protests yielded the encouraging results of Egypt or Libya. In Yemen, President Ali Saleh declared a state of emergency in March 2011; despite making some concessions to the protesters, he had broken previous promises not to seek reelection (he had been in office since 1978) and increasingly

used deadly force against protesters. As the protesters began to form an armed rebellion, violence escalated until the president was wounded in a rocket attack in June 2011; his return to Yemen on September 23 promised more violence to follow.

The Arab Spring movement reached Syria, under the control of President Bashar al-Assad, in March 2011. Syria, widely condemned in the international community for human rights violations and the severity of the Assad regime, responded to the demonstrators almost immediately by deploying tanks, troops, and artillery intent on crushing the protest. As with the Arab Spring movement in general, popular modern technology enabled Syrian citizens to broadcast videos and information to a world hungry for news after foreign journalists were expelled from the country. The same technology enabled many of the protests in the first place, because participants could communicate with their fellows in real-time.

*Above: Hand-held rocket and grenade launchers are typical of the weapons employed by rebels in the Arab uprisings. The President of Yemen was wounded in a rocket attack in June 2011.*

*Below: Map of North Africa and Middle East where the Arab Spring was first manifest in Tunisia and Egypt, with protests and rebellions quickly spreading to other countries, including Libya, Yemen, and Syria.*







## SPRING COMES TO LIBYA

Libya, a predominantly Sunni Muslim country of more than 6.5 million people in 2010, had won its independence from Italy in 1951. Only sixteen years later a young army colonel named Muammar al-Qaddafi orchestrated a military coup, seizing control of the country while the pro-Western king, Idris I, was in Turkey. Thus began his dictatorial reign of forty-two years, ending with his death at the hands of revolutionaries.

## FROM PROTEST TO REVOLUTION

Libya joined the Arab Spring on February 15, 2011. The precipitating spark was the arrest of Fethi Tarbel, a human rights lawyer representing the families of the thousand-plus political prisoners massacred in 1996 at the Abu Salim prison in Tripoli, Libya's capital.

Protesters took to the streets of Benghazi, the second-largest city after Tripoli, demanding that Qaddafi step down. Soon people started protesting in Tripoli as well. The regime responded harshly, attacking the protesters with guns, tanks, and even warplanes; Qaddafi also shut down Internet access and telephone services, attempting to prevent communication among the malcontents. These punitive tactics drew the condemning eye of the international community; the protesters, who began to attract defectors from the army, asked the United Nations to impose a no-fly zone over Libya and began to engage pro-Qaddafi troops in armed rebellion.

## TRANSITION

By the end of March, revolutionaries controlled most eastern cities, including Benghazi, Ajdabiya, and al-Brega, and were winning the fights for Ras Lanuf and Bin Jawad. Heavy fighting continued in the west and central parts of the country, particularly in and around Tripoli, where Qaddafi concentrated his forces. The UN imposed a no-fly zone and authorized foreign intervention to protect civilians on March 17; two days later, now supported by foreign air power, the rebels launched a major offensive. Although Qaddafi's army had the advantages of training, equipment, and resources, high-level defections from Qaddafi's inner circle highlighted the regime's vulnerability. The military situation, with foreign operations now under the aegis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), stalled.

Finally, on August 22 rebel forces succeeded in seizing portions of Tripoli and surrounding areas; on August 23 they scored a major victory by taking control of Qaddafi's headquarters, Bab al-Aziziyah. But Qaddafi himself had fled. Not until October 20, 2011, did Qaddafi suffer an ignominious death at the hands of a violent revolutionary mob. One month before, on September 15, the UN formally recognized the opposition government, the Transitional National Council (TNC), as Libya's representative authority.

Above left: *The protests in Tunisia were sparked by the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi in December 2010 and led to the ousting of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali a month later.*

Above right: *Protests began in Yemen in January 2011. Demonstrators protested against unemployment, economic conditions, and political corruption. Below: Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt, where tens of thousands of protesters gathered to demand immediate governmental reforms.*











# 2

## EUROPE

Although one of the world's smallest continents (only Australia is smaller), Europe led the world for centuries in exploration and technological advancement. Both world wars began in Europe, and much of the world's current geopolitical and even cultural maps can be traced to European conquests of past centuries. Two of humanity's most celebrated ancient civilizations—Greece and Rome—were located in Europe and one of the world's great religions—Christianity—had a stronghold there for more than a millennia.

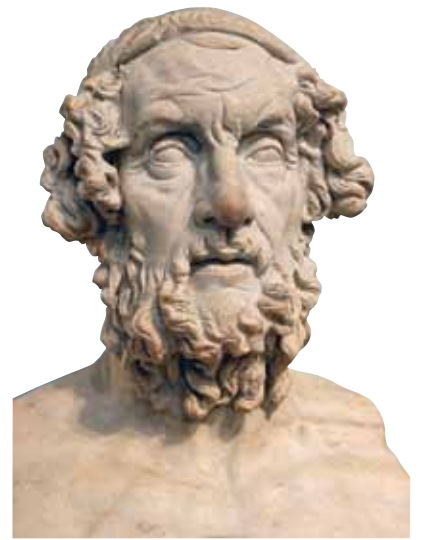
Yet, despite the success of conquerors like Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, and Napoleon, Europe has never remained unified for long. One driving factor behind Europe's rapid technological advancement is perhaps the near-constant warfare that has embroiled its people. A multiplicity of cultures and ethnicities formed a rich tapestry of nations whose borders and definitions demanded unceasing expansion or defense. Enmities, such as that between England and France, could last for centuries. Wars like the Hundred Years War (which lasted even longer) demonstrate a bellicose fervor. In the nineteenth century, however, England and France joined hands in friendship, mere decades after England led the charge against Napoleon; the two countries have remained staunch allies ever since.

Every European country can boast of archaeological evidence of thousands of years of human history. The continent's unique role in world affairs from the fifteenth century onward makes its roots of interest to all of us. Beginning with the Greek hoplites, through the mounted warriors of the Middle Ages, and into the gunpowder age, Europe has produced some of the world's finest military traditions, and, while its past is bloody, its achievements are indisputably great.



# ARCHAIC GREECE

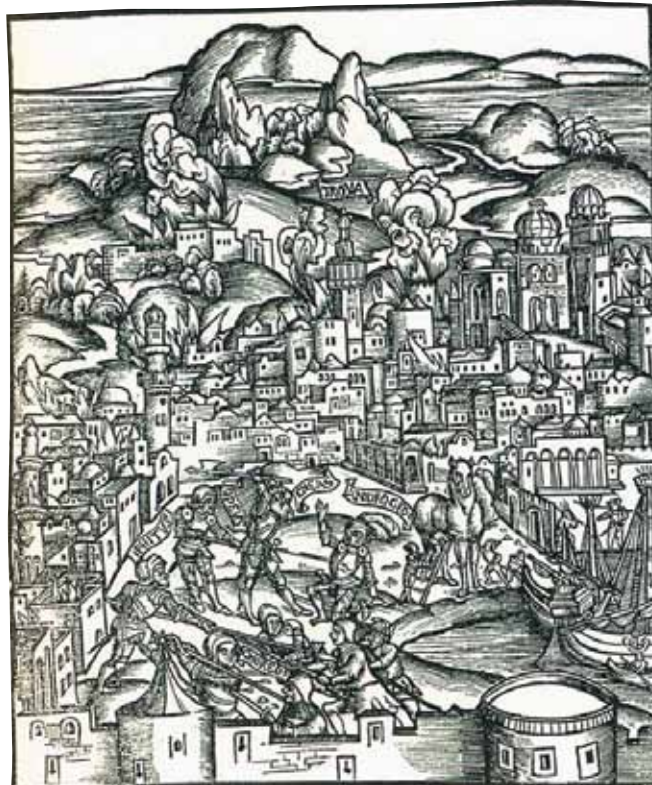
Greece, long regarded as one of the major wellsprings of Western civilization, developed after the decline of the mysterious Mycenaean civilization, around 1200 BC. Inaccurately termed the “Dark Ages,” this first age of Greek dominance, from about 1100 to 800 BC, produced, among other things, the sophisticated tradition of oral poetry that includes Homer’s *Odyssey* and *Illiad*. The Archaic Period, from about 800 to 500 BC, followed the Dark Ages, and was, in turn, followed by the Classical Age, from 500 BC to Alexander the Great’s death in 323 BC, and the Hellenistic Period, from 323 BC to Rome’s conquest of Egypt in 30 BC. While Ancient Greece is deservedly famous for its artistic, philosophic, political, and cultural achievements, undoubtedly one of its more lasting contributions to the West is the manner in which the Greeks waged war.



*Regarded as the greatest ancient Greek epic poet, Homer’s works mark the start of the Western canon of literature.*

## The Trojan War

One of the most famous wars fought by the ancient Greeks is the semimythical, semilegendary, semihistorical Trojan War. Treated by many ancient authors, most famously Homer (although his *Illiad* begins in the ninth year of the war), the Trojan War pitted the citizens of Troy, a city controlling a powerful kingdom in Anatolia, against a Greek confederacy led by King Agamemnon of Mycenae and the brother-in-law of Helen—whose abduction by Paris, a Trojan prince, precipitated the war. For nine years the war resulted in nothing but bloodshed, the Greeks futilely besieging Troy’s massive walls. They prevailed only when Odysseus, the “canniest of the Greeks” and eponymous hero of Homer’s *Odyssey*, devised a trick to sneak Greek soldiers into the city inside the famous Trojan Horse. Historians and archaeologists have examined Homer’s epics and other ancient sources closely to determine their accuracy; little agreement has emerged.



*Above: This woodcut by Johann Grüninger depicts the Greeks entering Troy in the Trojan horse. The image accompanied a fifteenth century printing of Virgil’s Aeneid, which tells the story of Aeneas, a Trojan warrior and ancestor to the Romans.*

*Below: Hittite and Egyptian texts from the time of the Trojan War describe conflicts in present-day Anatolia.*



## CITY-STATES AND HOPLITES

Warfare in the Dark Ages was likely an aristocratic enterprise, similar to that of neighboring civilizations, driven by the politics of kings. Yet, an intriguing description of the non-Greek Trojans meeting the Greek Achaeans in battle comes from the third book of the *Illiad*: “The Trojans advanced as a flight of wild fowl or cranes that scream overhead drive them over the flowing waters . . . and they wrangle in the air as they fly; but the Achaeans marched silently, in high heart, and minded to stand by one another.” This poetic eighth-century image accords with the genius of Greek warfare: the Greek hoplites, arrayed in tightly packed ranks, were dependent not on individual prowess, as in the individualized, heroic, aristocratic warfare more usually celebrated in Homer, but relied, rather, on collective strength.

Although it has, perhaps, more ancient origins, Hoplite warfare did not fully develop until the Archaic Period, when the Greeks formed their quintessential political units, the polis, or city-states. Hundreds of these sprang up across the Greek Mediterranean world, often competing for valuable border territories. In these small wars, citizen-soldiers would don their heavy bronze armor—only men who could afford such valuable armor, which weighed up to seventy-five pounds, could become hoplites—and clash in a single, violent battle. Throughout the Archaic Period, armies were fairly small, tactics usually unimportant, and logistics irrelevant, since “wars” rarely lasted longer than three days: one for traveling, one for fighting, and one for returning home.

On occasion, however, wars were larger in size. The Lelantine War, fought in the late eighth century BC, is notable for its breadth. Many city states became embroiled in the conflict in addition to the two primary contestants, Chalcis and Eretria, including Samos, Corinth, Thessaly, Miletus, Megara, and possibly Erythrae and Chios. The most militant of city-states, Sparta, conquered neighboring Messenia outright, also in the eighth century. Sparta, uniquely, required that every male child train for battle from the age of seven; they supported this young military caste by forcing conquered populations to farm for them. Horsemen and ships played their parts in these wars, but in Sparta, as in the rest of Greece, the primary fighter was the hoplite. Distinguished not by individual acts of heroism but by united action within the phalanx, this multiman-unit approach to infantry combat left a major and lasting impact on Western warfare.

*Right: Polyxena, daughter of the king of Troy and sister of Paris, is sacrificed after the death of Achilles. According to legend, Paris shot the fatal arrow into Achilles’ heel.*





# MARATHON

In 500 BC, Darius the Great, emperor of Persia, seemed all but unstoppable, commanding the vast machinery of mighty Persia to expand his empire by waging one successful campaign after the next. At the turn of the fifth century the Ionian Revolt, a rebellion that included several Hellenic city-states in Anatolia (with some support from Athens and Eretria) brought Greece proper into Darius's grand vision. After chasing the Scythians into Europe, Darius brought Thrace and Macedonia to heel; in 490 BC, he assembled what was for him a small expeditionary force of about 25,000, landing on the Plain of Marathon in Attica, a region controlled by Athens. The Greco-Persian Wars, which would forever alter the course of Greek civilization, had begun.



*Hoplites were so named because of the distinctive shields, called hoplons, that they carried.*

## THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

Athens sent one of its "all-day runners" to Sparta to appeal for aid against the Persians. The Spartans, while willing, were unfortunately delayed. Only 10,000 Athenians, plus about 1,000 Plataeans, assembled to fend off the Persian assault. Observing the Athenians holding the high ground blocking the road to Athens, the Persians sent a small strike force—composed mostly of cavalry—by ship to strike at Athens from the sea, while the rest of the army prepared to face the Greek hoplites.

According to Herodotus, the fifth-century BC "father of history," the Greeks lengthened their line to match the Persians, thinning the center but reinforcing the wings, and charged, "the first of all the Hellenes . . . who went to attack the enemy at a run, and they were the first also who endured to face the Median [i.e., Persian] garments and the men who wore them" (VI.112). The Persians broke the weak center of the Greek line, but on the flanks the Greeks sent the Persians fleeing back toward their ships. Rather than pursue, the Greeks wisely folded together in a pincer movement that decimated the remainder of Darius's army. Only then did the Athenians give chase, capturing seven Persian ships in fierce seashore fighting. The remaining Persians boarded and sailed for Athens, while the victorious Greeks rapidly returned to the city, arriving ahead of the Persian strike force.



*Above: The elite soldiers of Darius's army, depicted in a brick frieze found at his palace, were called the Immortals. They served as both imperial guards and as part of the standing army.*

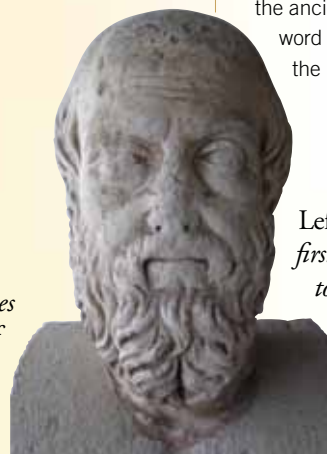


The Battle of Marathon was a decisive Greek victory. For once the Greeks, who were used to simple clashes of opposing forces (see page 48), employed tactics to great effect. The battle is also an early example of the positive effect of morale: defenders on their home ground, the Greek army had a great deal more at stake than did the Persian conscripts. In addition, the fundamental brilliance of a hoplite army was its cohesion: a hoplite unit fought as one, while the Persians—assembled from all over Darius's empire—did not even speak a common language. Nevertheless, although Darius died shortly after the battle, Persia did not give up its plan to conquer Greece.

## The Marathon Men

The marathon, a common track event today, takes its name from the battle of Marathon. The specifics of its origin are, however, not fully known. Some point to the "all-day runner" sent to Sparta, others to a runner sent from Marathon to Athens, who delivered his news of victory before dying of exhaustion. Since the revival of the Olympic Games in 1896—they were held in ancient Greece from 776 BC to about 400 CE—the marathon has been a major sporting event. It was only once the Olympics included long-distance events (only short distances were run in the ancient games) that the word "marathon" entered the English language.

*Left: The two armies met on the Plain of Marathon, just twenty-six miles north of Athens.*



*Left: Herodotus was the first historian known to collect his material systematically and to verify its accuracy. He gave us the word "history."*



# SALAMIS

Darius the Great died in 486 BC, to be succeeded by Xerxes, his son. After restoring order to a suddenly turbulent empire and utterly subjugating the particularly fractious Egyptians, Xerxes turned a vengeful eye toward the people of the Aegean Sea, with Athens in particular in his crosshairs. In 480 BC, ten years after the disaster at Marathon, Xerxes assembled an enormous army, claiming, according to Herodotus, to number more than two million men, plus another 2.6 million servants. The actual number must have been far less—perhaps between 100,000 and 150,000 warriors—but scholars have yet to agree on an exact figure.

## The 300 at Thermopylae

As Xerxes' mighty army advanced through Thessaly in 480 BC, the allied Greeks held back. At Thermopylae King Leonidas determined to take a desperate stand: with 300 elite Spartan hoplites and a small Greek army of about 6,700, he prepared to defend the narrow, fifty-foot-wide pass between the Kallidromos Mountains and the Malian Gulf at the ancient wall built at the Middle Gate. For two days the Greeks repulsed Persian attacks; even the crack troops of Persia, the Immortals, could make no headway. Then a Greek named Ephialtes betrayed his countrymen by showing the stymied Persians a secret pass, allowing them to flank the badly outnumbered defenders. In one of the most dramatic scenes in military history, Leonidas allowed the bulk of the Greek army to flee but stayed himself, with all 300 of his own men and perhaps 1,200 others left to cover their retreat. To a man they died, taking, if Herodotus can be trusted, some 20,000 Persians with them, including two of Xerxes' brothers. Herodotus contends that Xerxes "was enraged with Leonidas while alive more than with any other man on earth" (VII.238).

Right: Spartan king Leonidas is shown preparing for the Battle of Thermopylae in the second Persian invasion of Greece. The battle has become an example of the power of training, equipment, tactics, and patriotism in multiplying the impact of a fighting force.

## THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS

After destroying the Spartan defenders at the pass of Thermopylae, Xerxes marched at will through Attica, which—thanks to the slow advance of the army and the heroism of the Spartans—had been evacuated, leaving Athens empty for the Persian attackers. Meanwhile, a new, hastily built Athenian-led Greek fleet of about 350 ships (to the Persians' 1,207) prepared to confront the invaders on the ocean. Herodotus informs us that the Persians discovered the fleet in the narrow straits between mainland Greece and the island of Salamis. Seeking to trap it, a squadron of 200 Egyptian ships sailed in the night to the Straits of Megara, while the bulk of the Persian navy waited beside the island of Psyttaleia. In the morning, the Greek navy drew back into the strait, apparently trying to retreat; from an observation post on the mainland, Xerxes watched eagerly as his Persians pursued.

The Persian rowers were exhausted from traveling through the night. In addition to the Greeks, they had to combat a heavy ocean swell. As they entered the narrowest part of the strait, the Greeks struck, supported by a contingent of Aeginetans and Megaran vessels from the city of Salamis. Superior numbers were of no use to the Persians in these narrow confines; by the end of the day, Xerxes had lost 200 ships, to Greece's forty. Although the Persian army continued to press through the mainland for some days, reaching as far as Megara, the Battle of Salamis had turned the tide against them. Without naval support, Xerxes was forced to retreat to Thessaly and Macedonia.

Right: Xerxes was murdered in 465 BC by a powerful Persian court official. He is buried in this rock-cut tomb.



*In the Battle of Salamis the Persian fleet attacked in three lines, with one contingent blocking the west channel to Salamis.*

## THE BATTLE OF PLATAEA

In the spring of 479 BC, the largest army of allied Greeks ever seen—numbering forty thousand hoplites and a few thousand lightly armed irregulars—gathered at Plataea. Led by the Spartan general Pausanias, the Greeks met a Persian army commanded by a general named Mardonius, Xerxes' cousin and son-in-law (Xerxes himself had returned to Persia). Mardonius brought roughly 60,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, including several thousand Greek allies, to bear against the Greek defenders. Several days of maneuvering finally ended in a brief but violent battle. At first it appeared that things were going Mardonius's way, with the cavalry pressing the Megarans and Athenians hard, but Spartan discipline hardened the resolve of their allies who, despite heavy casualties, delivered a crushing defeat, killing all but 3,000 Persians. Around the same time a Greek naval victory at Mycale destroyed the last remaining hope for Persian naval supremacy. The dream of Persian hegemony in Greece had finally been annihilated.



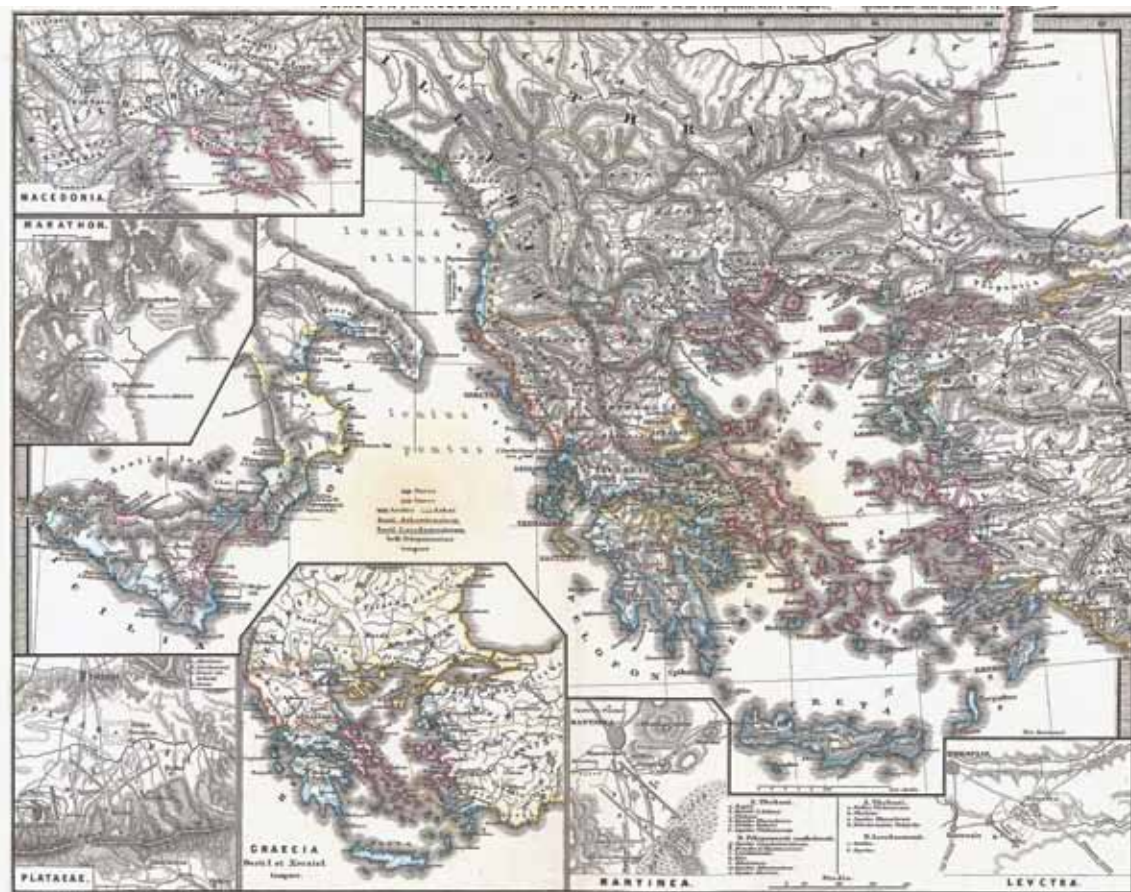


# PELOPONNESIAN WAR

With one or two exceptions, the Persian wars of the early fifth century BC forever ended the old style of Greek warfare, which were characterized by the small-scale, single-day clashes of hoplites. The Persian Wars left two Greek city-states dominant, but as they expanded throughout the Mediterranean Athens and Sparta eyed each other warily. Athens upgraded the navy it built for the Battle of Salamis. Sparta and its allies continued to focus on hoplites, but they also added lightly armed skirmishers and cavalry to the mix. By the time of the Second Peloponnesian War in 431 BC the Athenian empire spread across the Aegean Sea, its ambitions setting it on a collision course with Sparta.



*Called “the first citizen of Athens,” the influential statesman and orator Pericles promoted the arts and spearheaded the building of most of the surviving structures on the Acropolis, including the Parthenon. .*



*Left: Greece, Macedonia, and Thrace as they appeared before the Peloponnesian War*

## THE ARCHIDAMIAN WAR

The first phase of the Peloponnesian War—known as the Archidamian War after King Archidamus II of Sparta—went well for Athens. Guided by Pericles, an influential statesman, Athens abandoned its fields and withdrew its population from Attica into the city. Sparta invaded Attica five times during the Archidamian War (431–421 BC), but to little effect: the “Long Walls” of Athens linked the city to the port of Piraeus, through which supplies, food, and money flowed. The Spartans had similarly bad luck in the west, losing every major engagement except Plataea, which surrendered in 427. By then a horrific plague had struck the crowded city of Athens, carrying off one third of its population, including Pericles, and with him the city’s cautious defense policy. Beginning in 427 Athens went on the offensive, meeting with considerable success, particularly at Pylos in 425, where the Athenians took several hundred Spartan hoplites hostage. Yet even as Athens encouraged revolt among the helots—the subjugated farmers whose labor supported the Spartan army—Sparta, identifying itself as a liberator from tyranny, fomented revolt among the Athenian colonies and allies, sending its best general, Brasidas, to Chalcidice. He won at Acanthus, Stagirus, and Amphipolis, where he died, as did Cleon, a powerful and hawkish Athenian statesman during the Peloponnesian War.

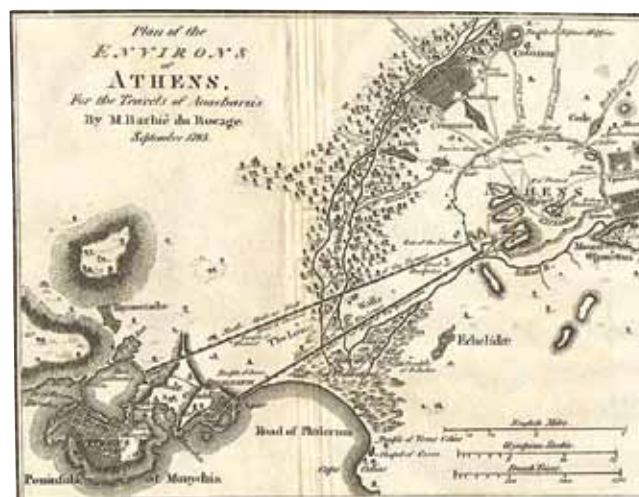
With Spartan military failures on one side, rumblings throughout the Athenian empire on the other, and the deaths of Brasidas and Cleon, the two city-states signed the Peace of Nicias. Although technically the peace lasted for six years, Athens and Sparta continued to jostle for position; proxy wars were fought by their colonies and allies. The Battle of Mantinea—in which Sparta regained some of its lost prestige and confidence with a victory over Mantinea—was the most important event during the “peace.”

## ATHENS’ MISTAKE

In 415 BC Athens mounted a large-scale invasion of Sicily, aiming at Syracuse, a Spartan ally whose growing power had raised Athenian suspicions. The poorly conceived attack resulted in the loss of an entire fleet, 40,000 soldiers, and considerable prestige. Wealthy Athens managed to rebuild the navy, but damage to morale proved unsalvageable. Sparta invaded Attica again, this time building fortifications and encouraging defections. Dependence on Athens’ colonies for food and supplies strained them to the breaking point, lending credence to Sparta’s self-description as a liberator. Revolts occurred throughout the empire, including in Anatolian cities pressed by Persian rulers who were allied with Sparta.

Political strife broke out in Athens itself in 411 BC. In the same year revolts erupted in Rhodes, Abydos, Lampsacus, Thasos—and, crucially, in Athens’s breadbasket, Euboea—nearly shattering the empire. Nevertheless, Athens fought on gamely, winning victories at Colophon, Chalcedon, Byzantium, and Thasos. By now, however, the Spartan navy rivaled that of Athens and a blockade of the city, followed by a naval victory at Aegospotami in 405 BC, sealed Athens’ fate. Spartan troops took the city—the Long Walls were dismantled and the long Peloponnesian War ended.

*Below: The Long Walls of Athens were a key part of the city’s defense strategy, providing a link to the sea and supplies even during a siege.*





# TRIREMES AND LONGBOATS

Greece's victory over the Persian Empire in the fifth century BC depended largely on its use of a ship called a trireme. Thanks to the trireme, a light but powerful oared warship that used three banks of rowers, Athens expanded into a mighty maritime empire; ever after, navies would be a necessary component in the military strategy of the West. In northwestern Europe, the Vikings and the British favored longboats, which utilized one row of oarsmen on each side.

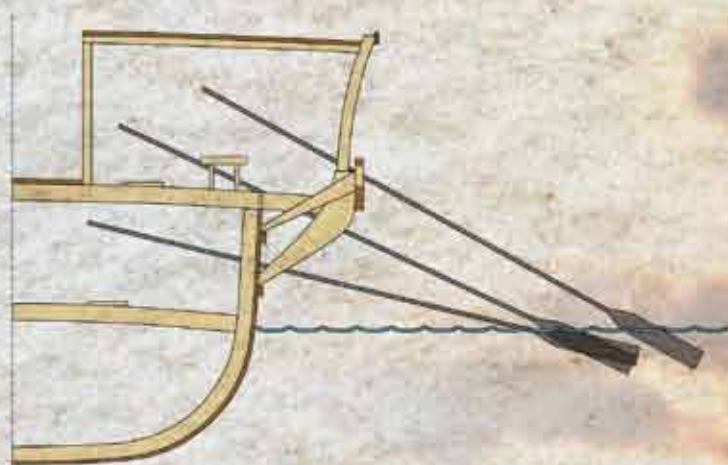
Right: *Viking ships served several purposes: they could be used for warfare, cargo, or burial. Warships were heavier and larger than cargo vessels, measuring as long as 140 feet.*



## Minoan Civilization

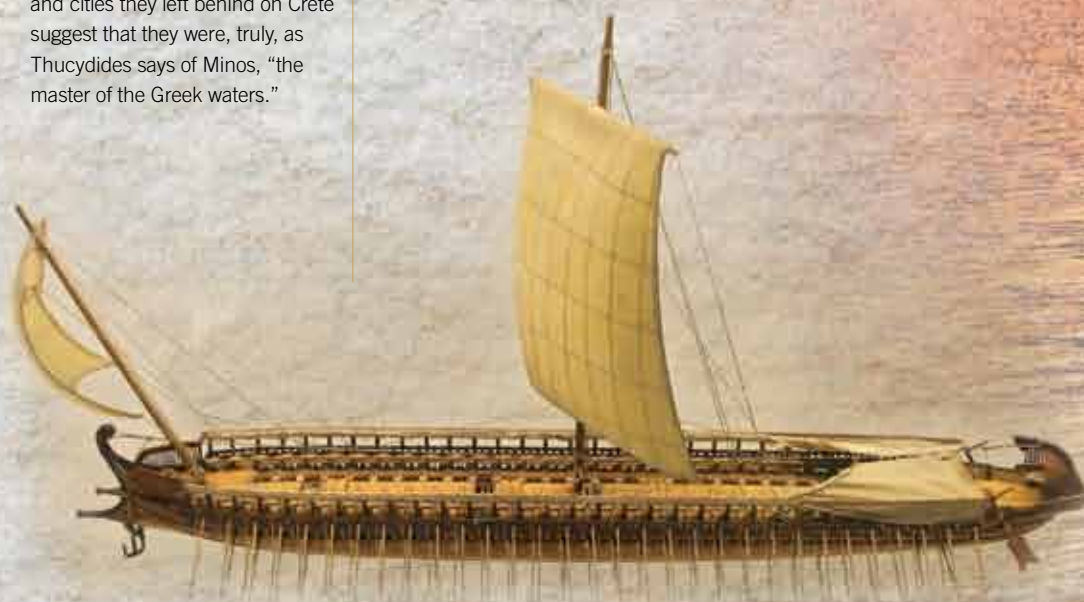
Writing in the fifth century BC, the great Greek historian Thucydides identified Minos—legendary king of Crete and eponymous leader of the Minoan civilization—as the first ruler in history to own a fleet of ships. During the Bronze Age, the Minoan civilization flourished on Crete, but our knowledge of Minoan shipbuilding technology is limited to representations on seals—archaeologists have yet to identify a Minoan ship. From the available evidence, however, scholars believe Minoan ships to have been fairly small, with only a single mast, although some tantalizing suggestions exist—in the *Odyssey*, for example—that Minoans also crewed large ships with fifty oars.

As the Greeks did several centuries later, the Minoans used their vessels to establish colonies on distant shores and to operate extensive trading routes. Their ancestors, obviously, must have used ships to settle on Crete—an island—in the first place. The Minoan civilization presents scholars no end of mystery—their written language remains stubbornly resistant to attempts to decipher it—but the grand palaces and cities they left behind on Crete suggest that they were, truly, as Thucydides says of Minos, “the master of the Greek waters.”



Above: *The trireme had three levels of rower: the thranites were the upper level of oarsman, the zygitai, the middle, and the thalamites formed the lower level.*

Below: *Around 900 the Phoenicians became a leading sea power in the Mediterranean. Of Phoenician design, this ship is built for fifty rowers.*





## A GRECIAN NAVY

The earliest ships employed by the Greeks for military purposes were used for transportation, not as warships: Homer, in the *Iliad*, made famous the image of a vast army crossing the sea to fight on land. Triremes never ventured out of sight of land, even after the people of the Aegean and Mediterranean seas began fighting actual naval battles. Infantry would watch—literally, from the sidelines—to offer support for those who had to swim for shore. The single-hulled construction of the trireme contributed to its lightness, and therefore its speed, but such a light ship could not withstand the heavy swells and winds of the open waters.

The crew of a trireme would try to ram an enemy ship with the bronze-plated ram attached to its keel. A fully oared trireme could reach 9 knots, generating sufficient momentum to punch the ram through the thin hull of an enemy ship. The total crew numbered about 200, with 170 rowers manning three banks on each side of the ship. For its unrivaled fleet of 200 triremes, Athens, at the height of its power, employed some 40,000 rowers. Besides their formal military role, triremes also carried raiders on pirate attacks throughout the Mediterranean world, as well as naval policemen, who escorted merchant vessels on their lucrative journeys across the waves.



Above: *The Viking siege of Paris, AD 885-6. Paris was then capital of the kingdom of the West Franks.*

*Viking ships were slender, long boats, with symmetrical ends. They were built with overlapped planks riveted together.*





# WARS OF THE REPUBLIC

Rome operated under a republican government for centuries before Augustus transformed the sprawling nation into an empire, but even in their earliest days, the Romans demonstrated the ambition, political adroitness, and military acumen that would make their country one of the world's most successful civilizations. At first Rome was just one of many ethnically Latin cities clustered on the Tiber River, although it seems that from the start Rome held itself aloof from the rest of Latium, whose cities formed a loose consortium now called the Latin League. It was with the League that Rome fought its first wars of expansion in the early fifth century BC. Even as it was taking over Latium, however, Rome faced two other opponents: the Aequi to the northeast and the Volsci to the southeast. Both had pressed hard into Latin territory. It took Rome until 390 BC to drive out the interlopers and gain full control of its new heartland.



Above: In Roman currency the denarius was the most common coin produced.

Below: King Pyrrhus was one of the fiercest opponents of the early Roman Republic. Several of his battles, though victorious, cost him heavy losses, from which the term "Pyrrhic victory" derived.

Below right: The region of Etruria included what is present-day Tuscany, Latium, Emilia-Romagna, and Umbria.

## ETRURIA AND THE SAMNITES

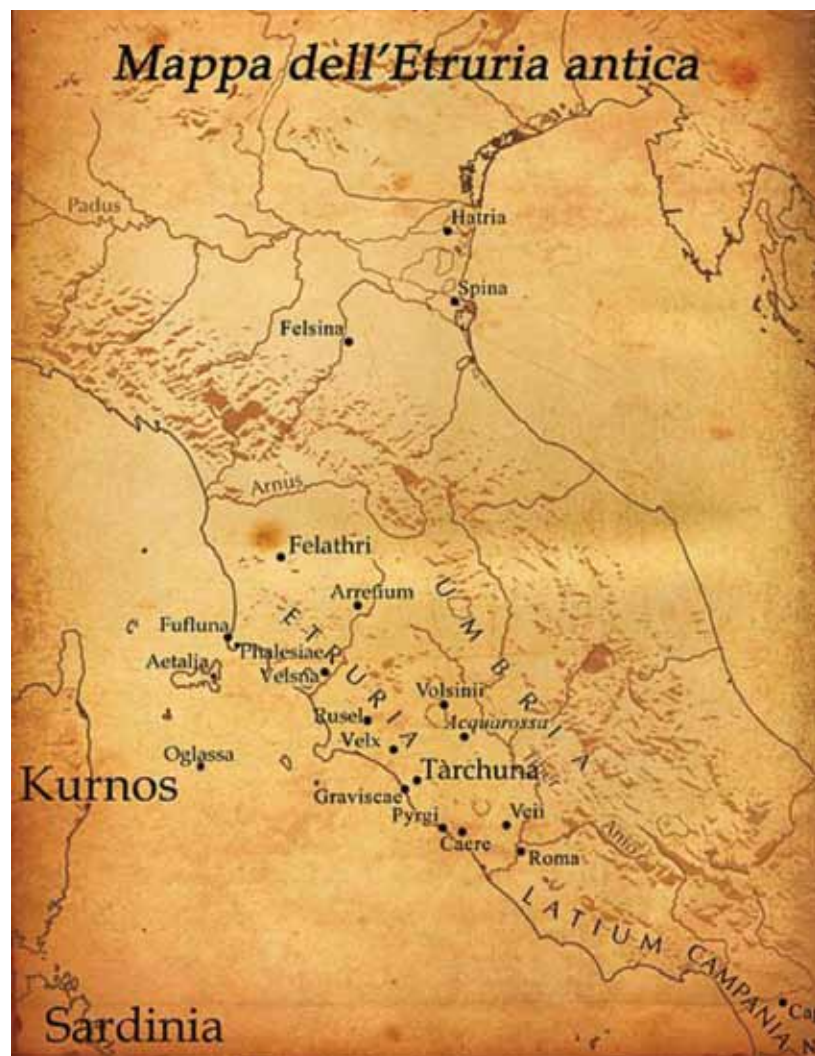
Rome's first wars against mature cities, as opposed to tribes, occurred in the late fifth century BC. In 426 BC, after a decade-long struggle, Rome finally conquered Fidenae, a city just to Rome's northeast. The move brought Rome face-to-face with Veii, an Etruscan city across the Tiber. After another ten-year struggle, which lasted from 406 to 396 BC, Rome brought Veii to heel. With the annexation of Veii's territory, Rome expanded by one third, but before it could capitalize on its newfound wealth, invading Gauls struck through northern Italy, sacking Rome itself. Revolts broke out in the aftermath of this humiliation, but the determined Romans spent the next several decades reestablishing control, winning Latium for good in 338 BC and securing the rest of Etruria by the late 270s BC.

By now Rome had turned to southern Italy, home of the Campanians and Samnites. While Rome disposed of Campania quickly, with a decisive victory at the Battle of Trifanum in 340 BC, they were obliged to fight three wars against Samnium between 343 and 290 BC. The second of these—the Great Samnite War—took twenty years. At the Battle of the Caudine Forks in 321 BC the Samnites delivered a crushing defeat to the Romans. This led to a five-year hiatus during which the Samnites recovered much of their territory,

even as Rome was building colonies on Samnium's borders. The Romans also constructed the famous Appian Way to transport troops south more readily. It took a third Samnite War (298–290 BC) to subdue the recalcitrant Samnites, after which they became staunch Roman allies.

## PYRRHIC VICTORIES

In 282 BC the Romans came to blows with the Greek colonists of southern Italy, who disputed Rome's claim to the city of Tarentum. King Pyrrhus of Epirus, which was on the Greek mainland, sailed to their aid at the head of 35,000 men and twenty war elephants. The Romans lost their first battle, at Heraclea, in 280 BC, costing Pyrrhus 4,000 men. Pyrrhus won a second victory at the Battle of Asculum in 279 BC, losing another 3,500 men in the process. When complimented on his successes, Pyrrhus replied bitterly that another such victory would utterly undo him (hence the expression "a pyrrhic victory"). After a brief expedition in Sicily against Carthage in 275 BC Pyrrhus finally did meet defeat at the Battle of Beneventum and returned to Greece, whereupon Rome, acquitting itself with customary alacrity, conquered both the defenseless Greek colonies and Tarentum.





# ROME: CAESAR

Without question one of military history's finest generals and one of the world's most influential figures, Julius Caesar possessed a strategic genius surpassed only by his political ambition. Roman politics in the late Republic were complicated and subtle, but Caesar, who was born to a patrician family that lacked influence, nevertheless managed to play the political game like a master. His strength of character is demonstrated by a strange event that occurred early in his career. In 75 BC while en route to Greece he was captured by Cilician pirates, who held him for ransom. Becoming friendly with his captors, Caesar convinced them they could ask for more money than they had previously thought, at the same time warning them that he would hunt them down when he could. The Roman historian Livy suggests that perhaps the pirates thought he was joking—yet as soon as they received their ransom and dropped him off in Miletus, Caesar hired ships of his own and later captured and crucified the pirates.

By this time he had distinguished himself on the battlefields of Cilicia and in 72 BC, shortly after his pirate misadventure, returned to the army as a military tribune. This was merely the first step up a tall ladder, however, for Caesar employed his vaunted oratorical skills and political acumen as deftly as he did his armies. Allying himself with the popular and powerful Gnaeus Pompey, Caesar earned more promotions and won several elections before joining Pompey and Crassus in the three-man consulship known as the "First Triumvirate."

## THE GALLIC WARS

In 58 BC Caesar assumed governorship of Cisalpine Gaul. Instead of resting on his administrative laurels, however, he took to the battlefield. His conquest of Gaul stemmed in large measure from his steely ambition, and the knowledge that nothing impressed the populace of Rome as much as a victorious warrior. Caesar had barely settled in before several Celtic tribes asked for his aid in defeating an aggressive tribe known as the Helvetii, whom Caesar duly trounced at the Battle of Bibracte. He followed with a victory against a German tribe, the Ariovistus, at the Battle of the Vosges—again, by Gallic invitation.

Perceiving that Gaul, which was peopled by bickering tribes, was ripe for Roman conquest, Caesar moved swiftly. In 57 BC he defeated the Nervii, a Belgic tribe, subsequently moving against the Venteti in northeast Gaul. In 55 BC Caesar crossed the Rhine River for the first time, campaigning against German tribes and becoming the first Roman to cross the English Channel. He invaded Britain a second time in 54 BC, but in part because the Celtic tribes of Gaul started to rebel he failed to conquer the island.

The following year Crassus died, causing severe political strain between Caesar and Pompey. Before Caesar could manage affairs at home, however, he had to deal with the most serious challenge to his newly conquered Gaul: a rebellion led by Arvernian Vercingetorix (the name means "over-king of warriors"), who handed Caesar his only serious military defeat in Gaul at the siege of Gergovia.

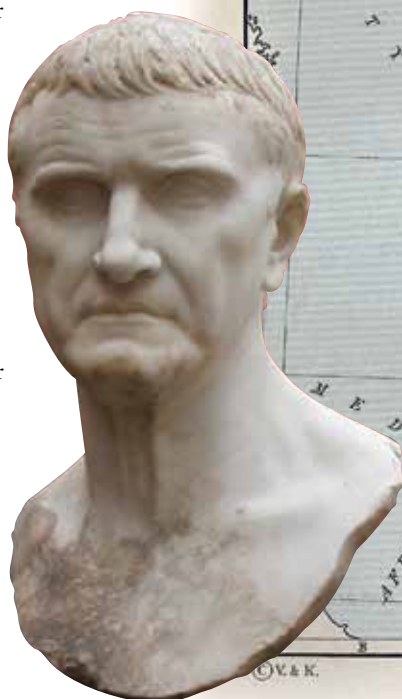
Had the Celts banded together from the beginning it seems likely that their superior manpower and cavalry could have neutered Caesar's ambition, but by the time Vercingetorix began his campaign in 52 BC it was too late. He surrendered to Caesar within the year after Caesar routed a Gallic army sent to relieve the siege of Alesia.

Right: *The political alliance formed by Crassus (shown here), Pompey, and Caesar dominated politics until Crassus's death. The three favored populist tactics that angered the conservative elite.*



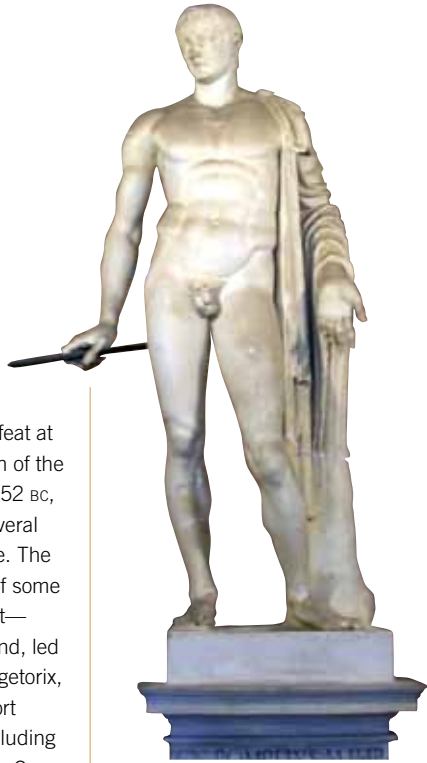
Above: *Julius Caesar played a critical role in transforming the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire. After the conquest of Gaul, he extended Rome's holdings across the Rhine and conducted the first invasion of Britain.*

Below: *The map shows the addition of Roman territories from 500 to 100 BC, from the Appennine Mountains to Magna Graecia and Etruria.*





## ROME: CAESAR

**Besieged in Gaul**

Caesar's embarrassing defeat at Gergovia, the primary town of the Arverni Celts, occurred in 52 BC, after Caesar had taken several other Gallic towns by siege. The unprecedented coalition of some thirty Gallic tribes held fast—despite these victories—and, led by the redoubtable Vercingetorix, continued to attract support from new Gallic tribes, including some former Roman allies. One such defection occurred just as Caesar reached Gergovia, where at the instigation of Vercingetorix, the Aedui, a powerful tribe headquartered at Bibracte, revolted, sending 10,000 men to aid Vercingetorix at Gergovia.

With the river behind him and Gergovia perched 1,200 feet above him on an imposing plateau, Caesar seized an important hilltop position, which cut Gergovia off from the river and its access to water and supplies. Still, he no longer had the luxury of a long siege to starve the defenders. Instead he had to reduce the fortress quickly, then move on to deal with the rebelling Aedui before the revolt spread. Gergovia had stout defenses: Caesar perceived his only chance to finish the assault quickly would be to draw out Vercingetorix. He planned to assault the most vulnerable side, the west, then fake a retreat, baiting the Gauls into following him onto open ground. According to Caesar's own account, not all his troops heard the trumpets sound the retreat, while others dutifully turned back. Caesar was obliged to throw men back to the front to save those who had so dreadfully exposed themselves, but the disaster was complete: he was obliged to withdraw, leaving on the field behind him more than twice as many dead Romans as Gauls. Within a year, however, Caesar had recouped his losses, won a major victory on the Vingeanne River, and besieged Vercingetorix again, this time in Alesia. An attempt to relieve the siege failed to break Caesar's lines, and with Vercingetorix's surrender in October 52 BC, the last Gallic hope of resisting Roman conquest faded.

*Julius Caesar was killed in the Senate on the Ides of March (March 15), reportedly at the foot of this statue of Pompey.*



*In this Baroque painting by Italian artist Pietro da Cortona, Caesar is seen handing the throne of Egypt to Cleopatra.*



*Above: The eastern part of the Roman Empire included Greece, Turkey, the Middle East, and parts of North Africa.*

**THE FOUR TRIUMPHS OF CAESAR**

To avoid prosecution by his political enemies Caesar had to retain his governorship and military command, but on January 1, 49 BC, the Roman Senate demanded he give them up. Instead Caesar crossed the Rubicon River at the head of his loyal veteran army. The result, in short order, was civil war. Caesar cleared Pompey's forces out of Italy and Spain, then brought his legions to Greece, where Pompey not only had larger numbers but also possessed a navy, which Caesar lacked. Caesar prevailed nevertheless, eventually defeating an army of 46,000 with only 21,000 at the Battle of Pharsalus. Pompey, escaping to Egypt, was eventually betrayed and murdered.

In Egypt Caesar was charmed by Cleopatra. He supported her in her quest to take Egypt's throne at the expense of her brother, Ptolemy XIII. In August 47 BC Caesar again prosecuted his own civil war, defeating King Pharnaces of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, King Juba of Numidia, and Pompey's sons at the Battle of Munda in Spain. During this campaign Caesar famously declared "*Veni, vidi, vici*," which means "I came, I saw, I conquered." He ruled Rome as its dictator—his official title—for less than a year before his own betrayal and assassination. It was left to his adopted son, Octavian Augustus Caesar, to become Rome's first emperor.

*Right: Commentarii de Bello Gallico (Commentaries on the Gallic War) is Julius Caesar's firsthand account of the Gallic wars. The book is in eight parts; the first seven were written by Caesar, while the final book was written after his death by one of his generals.*





# ROME: TRAJAN

The Roman Empire rose to its greatest heights in the first and second centuries AD, spreading its wings from the British Isles to northern Africa, from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. Emperor Trajan, who ruled from AD 98 to 117, proved himself an adept administrator, as well as a gifted military general. Under Trajan Rome covered nearly the whole of Europe, as well as parts of Africa and the Middle East.



*This marble bust shows Trajan, who rose from relatively humble origins to become emperor. As an administrator, he is best known for his extensive building program, which reshaped the city of Rome.*

## THE DACIAN WARS

In AD 101 Trajan led approximately 100,000 soldiers in an invasion of Dacia. He may have wished to negate the potential challenge of King Decebalus of Dacia, a formidable character who was openly hostile to Rome. He may also have intended to secure Rome's Danubian border by creating a salient between German and Sarmatian tribes—who, if they united, as Decebalus indeed tried to convince them to do—would pose an enormous threat.

Trajan's army crossed the Danube at Viminacium and Drobeta, aiming for the Iron Gate and possibly the Vulcan passes through the Orăștie Mountains, whose unfriendly slopes and many fortresses protected the capital, Sarmizegetusa Regia. Wisely, Decebalus allowed the Roman forces to pass unmolested through the lowlands, whose flatter terrain would have favored the Romans, joining battle only once in the first year of the campaign. The Romans won a tactical victory at the Battle of Tapae, but Decebalus withdrew his forces in order, thereby achieving his primary objective: preventing the Romans from gaining a foothold in the mountains before the onset of winter. Trajan was obliged to withdraw to Moesia during the winter of AD 101–102; Decebalus, taking the offensive, inflicted heavy casualties but could not prevent Trajan from resuming the invasion the following spring. That year the Romans succeeded in taking several Orăștie fortresses, forcing Decebalus to surrender. While inflicting a heavy penalty on Dacia, Rome nonetheless allowed Decebalus to retain the kingship as a Roman client.

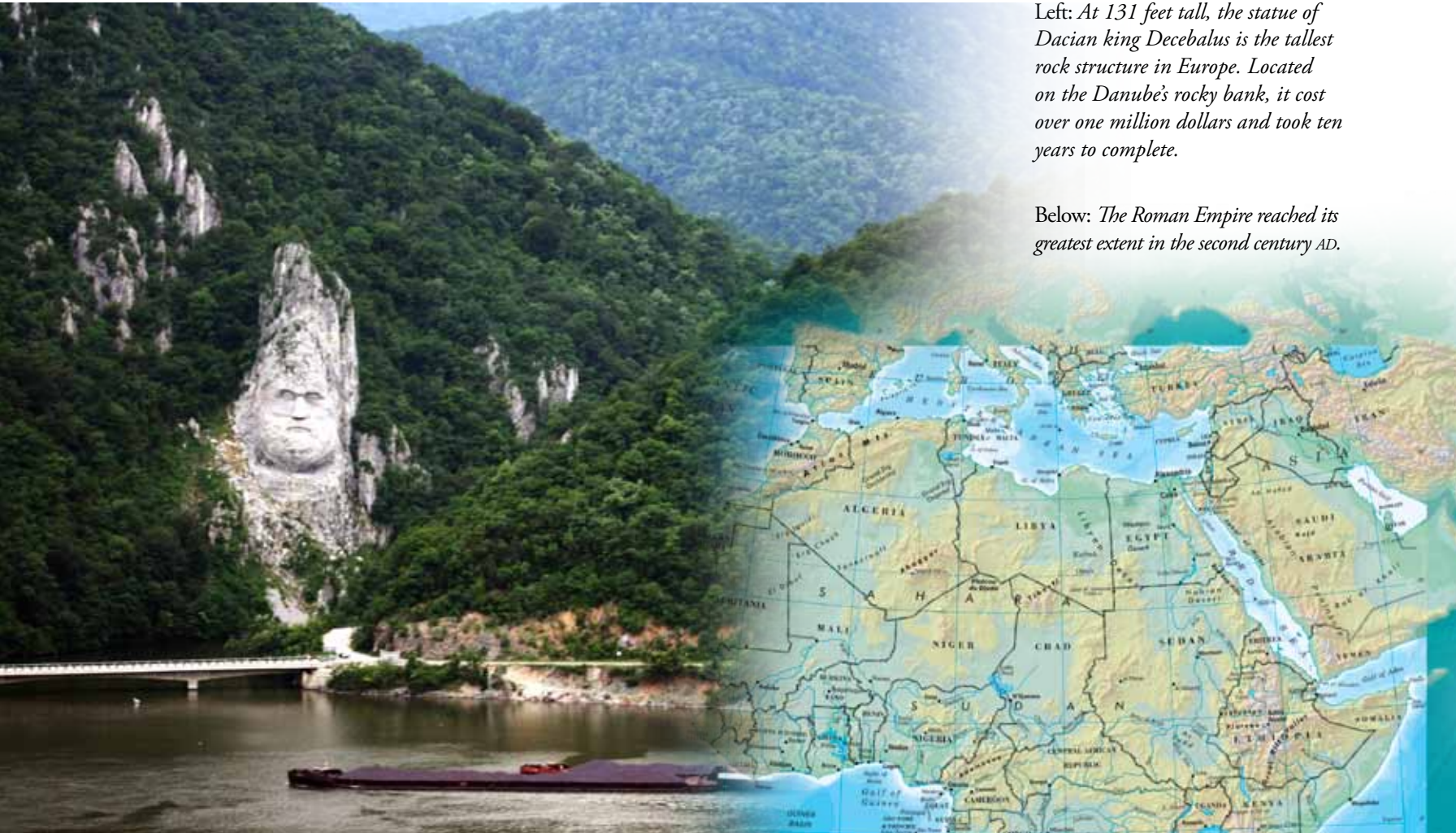
Ignoring the terms of the peace treaty, Decebalus rearmed his men, rebuilt his fortifications, and resumed his appeals to neighboring Germans and Sarmatians to unite in the face of the Roman threat. In AD 105 Trajan reinvaded. The Second Dacian War lasted only a year and Decebalus, whose forces were weakened by the imposition of the peace treaty and through defections, was never able to mount an effective defense. Trajan brought an even larger army than he had before, and, crucially, the Romans already had garrisons in the all-important Orăștie Mountains. When Decebalus committed suicide, Dacia finally became part of the Empire; Rome, having learned its lesson, relocated the Dacians throughout the Roman Empire, repopulating the new province with its own citizens.

## THE GLORY OF ROME

As with the Germanic and Sarmatians, so it was in the east with the Alans and Parthians: Trajan's eastern borders could not be secure as long as client kingdoms such as Armenia and Nabataea remained vulnerable. He annexed Nabataea in AD 105 or 106, finding a Parthian-supported usurper in Armenia in AD 113 and 114, finally proceeding to march on Parthia proper, conquering all the way through the capitol Ctesiphon, and extending the Roman border to the Persian Gulf. With the conquest of Britain, by about AD 73 the power of the Roman Empire reached its zenith.

## To Hadrian's Wall

Although Caesar had been forced to abandon his invasion of Britain, the island was too tempting to resist for long. In AD 43 Emperor Claudius sent four legions across the English Channel. From their landing in Richborough, they began the slow business of subduing Britain. The invasion ultimately took about thirty years, with major battles including the Medway River, Maiden Castle, Caer Caradoc, Watling Street, and Mons Graupius. Yet, despite several major efforts, the northern lands, now called the Scottish Highlands (Gaelic-speaking Scots would not arrive until the late fifth century AD) were never conquered. Roman control stopped at Hadrian's Wall, built by Emperor Hadrian, Trajan's cousin and successor between AD 122 and 128.



*Left: At 131 feet tall, the statue of Dacian king Decebalus is the tallest rock structure in Europe. Located on the Danube's rocky bank, it cost over one million dollars and took ten years to complete.*

*Below: The Roman Empire reached its greatest extent in the second century AD.*









Above: *Gaius Marius was elected consul an unprecedented seven times in his career. This bust of him is housed at the Glyptothek in Munich, Germany.*

Main picture: *Germanic warriors ambush three Roman legions in the Battle of Teutoburg in this 1909 painting by Otto Albert Koch*  
*Varusschlacht.*

# THE LEGIONS OF ROME

Any assessment of Rome's achievement must reflect on its legions, the backbone of its empire and, significantly, the cause of its collapse. Without question, the legions formed one of the ancient world's most impressive armies, made efficient and effective more through bureaucratic fussiness than through acts of individual heroism. Unsurprisingly, the composition of the legions changed over time: in the early Republic, legionaries were conscripted Italian farmers, resistant to distant foreign engagement because they needed to tend their lands; by the end of the empire, they were a cosmopolitan, multiethnic force of professional soldiers who seemed to have been born, in the words of the Jewish historian Josephus, "with weapons in their hands." Many never set foot in Italy.

## MARIUS'S LEGIONS

Gaius Marius, a general of the second century BC, who obsessed over every detail—from the design of the Roman javelin to the number of years served by each legionary—was the legions' major agent of change. Marius standardized everything, from a legion's composition to the tactical units; crucially, he defined and refined the cohort, a legion's basic 480-man building block. A Roman legionary was essentially a heavily armed infantryman, equipped with javelin or gladius (a type of short sword), although each legion also contained lightly armed skirmishers, cavalrymen, and—by the end of the Roman era—artillery weapons.

## CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND WARRIORS

Legionaries drilled endlessly, even when the legions patrolled the frontiers as both living shield and internal police force, centuries after the major conquests ended. Every man practiced the same techniques; every cohort knew its place in battle; every legion knew its role in strategy. The success of Rome's armies stemmed in large part from a legionary's confidence in his comrades and his leaders; like a well-oiled machine, the legions punched through often-larger armies regardless of terrain or enemy tactics.

In a real sense, legions built the empire. Not only did they conquer and control new territories, but they also doubled as engineers and construction workers, supplying infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and aqueducts, many of which can still be seen. And yet, even as the legions pushed the borders ever outward, they became a threat. All too often they would prove loyal to a general, rather than to the state, and as skilled professionals they demanded ever greater compensation, lending their strength to the highest bidder. Increasingly, too, they were recruited from outlying territories so that the possibility of frontier rebellion became a source of constant concern. Their pay and retirement benefits eventually proved unsustainable, and by the end of the empire the legions were little more than a constant drain on Rome's dwindling resources.

## The Battle of Teutoburg Forest

Naturally, even at Rome's peak the legions were not always successful. Occasional major defeats—such as Carrhae, in 55 BC, (see pages 172–173) or Teutoburg Forest, in AD 9—did occur. Teutoburg, in fact, was one of the worst military catastrophes in Rome's long history, not only in terms of the casualties—three legions, 18,000 men or more—but also for the humiliation, from which Rome never fully recovered. Publius Quinctilius Varus, the leader of the Roman army, was headed through Germania Magna toward his winter base at Xanten on the Rhine, in a region where, as his presence attested, Rome was busily making inroads. A German chieftain named Arminius, a personal friend of Varus's who had served as a Roman military officer, informed Varus of a small revolt not far off Varus's route. Varus turned aside to deal with it, but, in fact, Arminius, who had secretly constructed an alliance of German tribes, led him into a trap. Ambushed in the swampy, forested ground below Kalkriese Hill, the legionaries fell to the fierce German tribesmen, who emerged, screaming, from the dark surrounding wood. Later Roman forays across the Rhine were not as disastrous, although many historians believe that the defeat at Teutoburg prevented future attempts to conquer the region.



Left: *The Roman legion shown here is part of a series of engravings based upon Trajan's Column, a triumphal column in Rome that commemorates Trajan's victory in the Dacian Wars.*



# CELTIC EXPANSION

It is difficult to speak with any confidence of “the Celtic warrior” for the same reason that it is difficult to generalize about anything Celtic: the Celts, who spread from a heartland in central Europe to cover virtually the entire continent by about 200 BC, were not a monolithic empire, but rather a collection of tribes that shared common cultural features. Not until the middle of the first millennium AD, after they had been Christianized, did the Celts write about themselves, and by then their culture had absorbed many external influences. Contemporary information about continental Celts comes only from archaeological evidence and the writings of classical authors, who had biases of their own. The stereotype of the Celts as savage, bloodthirsty barbarians, for instance, must be seriously questioned, for although Celtic warbands certainly clashed with the Greeks, Romans, Carthaginians, and Anatolians, they also established lucrative trading networks that existed for centuries.



*In battle the driver controlled the chariot, while the warrior threw javelins at his opponents. The warrior then dismounted to fight on foot.*



*Above: Tribal in nature, Celtic social structure was based on class and kingship.*

*Below: Pergamon was the most powerful city in the Roman province of Asia before the rise of Ephesus in the first century AD. The Temple of Trajan was erected there.*

## THE CELTIC PERIL

If Julius Caesar and others can be trusted, Celtic warriors occupied an elite social stratum. Certain warrior bands may even have operated independently of tribal factions; the ferocity of certain warrior “tribes” encountered by the Romans, as well as later Irish literature, speaks to the existence of such dedicated warriors. The Celts had learned to fashion weapons out of iron by the time the Romans began encountering them regularly, although in some places—notably the British Isles—weapons were almost shockingly archaic. To their surprise, the Romans discovered that British Celts still used chariots, abandoned elsewhere for centuries. Despite these drawbacks, Celtic warriors had an impressive reputation throughout the Mediterranean world. Celts sacked Rome as early as 390 BC; a century later they sacked Delphi, a sacred location in Greece. Forever migrating, they reached Anatolia around the same time. The Celts had some success in Phrygia but met defeat at the hands of Attalus I, first king of Pergamum.

Even at its height, however, the “Celtic Peril,” so feared by the Mediterranean peoples, was actually beginning to operate in reverse. The Celts never united as a people, except under

certain localized personalities such as Vercingetorix (in first century BC Gaul) and Queen Boudica (in Britain) and as such they were vulnerable both to invading Germanic tribes in the east and the massed legions of Rome. By the sixth century AD, Celtic languages dominated only in parts of the British Isles—notably Wales, Ireland, Scotland, and Cornwall—and the extreme northwest of France.

## MARTIAL CUSTOMS

Heroic valor seems to have been valued highly among Celtic warriors, which may possibly account for their habit of going into battle naked. The custom of some Celtic warriors of augmenting their prowess by taking the heads of slain enemies appalled the Hellenized Mediterranean world, but it accords with what we know from archaeological evidence and from other sources. Warriors followed their king or other leaders, but they did not in general coordinate tactics—nor did their leaders construct elaborate strategies. Even tactical victories rarely affected extended situations against enemies like the Romans, who played a longer game when it came to warfare.



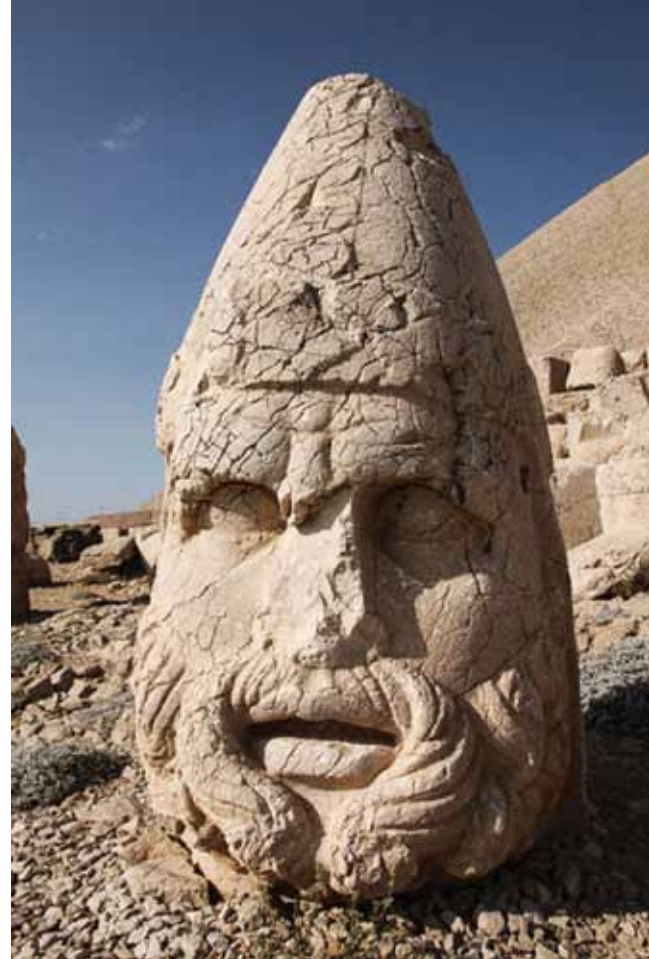
*Above: The Celts spread outward from central Europe. At the height of Celtic expansion, around 275 BC, Celtic tribes inhabited areas as far-flung as Ireland, France and the Low Countries, the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, the Balkans, and Anatolia.*



# CELTIC INVASION OF GREECE/GALATIA

The Celts rarely operated in coalition, but when they did they presented a formidable force. The second-century AD Greek writer Pausanias, likely drawing on the third-century BC works of Hieronymus of Cardia, speaks of an incredible 200,000- to 300,000-man army massing on the Macedonian border in 279 BC. This force, divided into three groups led by Bolgios, Cerethrios, and jointly by Brennus and Acichorios, pressed forward into Macedonia. The third group, having cleverly avoided the guarded fords by swimming across the Spercheios River, raided Delphi itself.

Pausanias's somewhat hysterical assessment of the atrocities committed by the Gauls en route to the sacred oracle contends that they committed every horror imaginable. He goes on to describe stoutly the defense of Delphi by the pagan god himself, through earthquake, frost, and lightning. The Gauls' destruction of the shrine dismayed their leader, Brennus, to the point of suicide, according to Pausanias, although this can doubtless be attributed to devout but unhistorical fancy. The Celts abandoned Greece at this point, he continues, and headed toward Asia Minor.



## IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM, HIRE THEM

Pausanias would have us believe that the Celts, demoralized from onslaughts of fury both human and divine, fled from Greece as soon as possible; evidence suggests, however, that they actually suffered few military defeats, enjoyed considerable plunder from Delphi and other Greek sites, and continued to rampage or settle, as they wished. The army led by Bolgios, in fact, defeated Ptolemy Ceraunos, king of Macedonia and former general of Alexander the Great, although the third, led by Cerethrios, suffered defeat at the hands of Ptolemy's successor, Antigonus Gonatas. With pragmatic foresight, the new king hired the defeated Celts as mercenaries.

This was not a new idea. In 280 BC, Pyrrhus of Epirus had hired Celts of the Po River valley in his effort to thwart an expanding Rome. In succeeding centuries, Celtic mercenaries could be found as far away as Egypt, where in the first century BC, according to the Jewish historian Josephus, several hundred of them served Empress Cleopatra as her personal bodyguard.

Those Celts who did migrate into Asia Minor did so by invitation of King Nicomedes of Bithynia, who was wrestling with a civil war at the time (278 BC). Serving the king well, they nevertheless plundered the rest of western Asia Minor until they were eventually defeated by King Antiochus I of Syria ("the Savior") in 275 BC. They remained in sufficient number to take over a part of Phrygia, subsequently named Galatia in their honor. Full revenge on Antiochus came in 261 BC, when he was killed in battle at Ephesus. Attalus I, king of Pergamon, considerably diminished the Galatians' power in the 230s, using Galatia as a home base for raiding and extorting tribute throughout Asia Minor. It took a Roman army, led by consul Gnaeus Manlius Vulso, to finally conquer the Galatians in 189 BC. Galatia's distinctive Celtic identity would subsequently be submerged in Hellenic culture.

Top: *The tomb of Antiochus I—who established a kingdom after the Roman defeat of the Seleucid Empire—is in Nemrut, Turkey. The statues have religious significance.*  
 Above: *Upon meeting with Celtic chieftans, Alexander asked what they feared most. Their reply: "That the sky may fall on our heads."*  
 Above left: *Celtic languages are still spoken today. Illyrian and Dacian languages are extinct.*



# ILLYRIA

The origins of the people known to the Greeks and Romans as Illyrians are somewhat obscure. Arriving in the western Balkans in the tenth century BC, they may have traveled from the eastern Balkans and thus be related to the Dacians and the Thracians. Alternately, they may have emigrated from central Europe. In that case they belonged to the proto-Celtic Hallstatt culture. In the historical period, the Greeks and Romans knew them as fierce warriors and bloodthirsty savages, but this description, applied to nearly every non-Greek or non-Roman nation, is not particularly helpful.

Top right: Called “the darling of all Greece,” Philip V was handsome, charismatic, and an able warrior. Assuming the throne at age seventeen, he ruled from 221 to 179 BC. After his loss to the Romans in the Second Macedonian War, he was forced to pay an indemnity and cooperate with Rome. He then concentrated his efforts on consolidating power in Macedon and reorganizing the country’s internal affairs.

Far right: Most Greek coinage was struck by city-states or empires, although some leagues issued money. These coins were minted by the Aetolian League, a confederation of tribes in central Greece. The League sided with Rome in the First Macedonian War.

Right: This third century BC plate from Albania depicts Illyrian warriors in combat.

Below: During the Bronze Age the Illyrians were the first tribe to come in contact with the ancient Greeks. The Greeks applied the name to all tribes in the region that shared similar languages and customs. This bronze belt-plate from the fifth century BC shows Illyrians in battle.

## THE ILLYRIANS

Celtic migration into the Balkans in the fourth and third centuries BC may have either reinforced or introduced Celtic culture in Illyria. Whatever the origins of the Celtic inflections of Illyrian culture, the Illyrians shared with the Celts a tribal system, in which only a very determined leader could forge a kingdom out of the strongly autonomous tribes, a warrior ethos, and a talent for fighting on horseback. As a result, the Illyrians fought among themselves and with their neighbors with some frequency, and managed to prevent Greece from establishing many colonies in their territories, although—because each tribe tended to retain its autonomy—the fortunes of individual tribes varied widely. Thus Corinthians successfully founded Epidamnus (now Durrës, Albania) in the seventh century BC and Macedonia conquered the Illyrian Paeonians in the fourth century BC.

The third century BC saw the Illyrians at their height, with successful rulers like King Agron, Queen Teuta, and King Genthius commanding the best-known Illyrian kingdom, called Scodra after its capital city (modern-day Shkodër, Albania). If Illyria had reached its pinnacle, however, it still could not compete with the Mediterranean’s rising star at Rome, and its most famous kingdom was also its last.



## THE ILLYRIAN WARS

Coastal Illyrians, notably from the Delmatae and Liburni tribes, harried traders across the Adriatic and Queen Teuta, who ruled from c. 230 to 227 BC, sent her navy to attack Sicily and conquered several Greek colonies in the Balkans as far as the island of Corcyra (modern-day Corfu). She refused Roman requests to rein in her pirates and an exasperated Rome went to war. In the first Illyrian War (229–228 BC), a Greek mercenary named Demetrius of Pharos switched sides at the sight of the Roman army and handed Corcyra over without fighting. After the Romans liberated several more Greek colonies along the shore Teuta was obliged to submit to Roman overlordship, but piracy continued, the northern part of Scodra remained intact, and soon Demetrius, whom the Romans had rewarded with territory, violated his treaty with Rome by employing a large new fleet. As a result, Rome fought—and won—a second Illyrian War in 219 BC.

Yet still Scodra was not reconciled to its fate as a Roman client, and the Third Illyrian War occurred in the larger series of conflicts known as the Macedonian Wars. Philip V of Macedon first started invading Illyria, but soon King Genthius became his ally against the Aetolians and Greece. Rome could not ignore this interference with its protectorate, and in the ensuing conflagration brought Illyria to its knees. The Third Illyrian War ended with Genthius’s surrender in 168 BC. Even so, some tribes continued to resist: the Pannonians only gave up the fight in 8 BC. Twenty years later a large Illyrian revolt required armed suppression, after which Rome had had enough, divided Illyria into provinces, and imported troops, administrators, and engineers to ensure the Illyrians’ Romanization.





# SCYTHIANS AND SARMATIANS

Around 700 BC, a group of nomads, called Scythians by the Greeks and Saka by the Persians, emerged from the east onto the Ukrainian steppe, north of the Black Sea, where they vanquished the Cimmerians in a protracted thirty-year war. For the next 500 years, they roamed the vast Central Asian steppe between the Dnieper and the Volga Rivers. And although they had no writing of their own, they appear in the texts of nearly every ancient civilization that did. Their ferocity was legendary, and their vast wealth, acquired by trade but also through lightning-fast raids, scarcely less so.



Archaeological finds reveal that the Samartians were skilled craftsmen, as evidenced by this bracelet and amulet.

## “NONE CAN ESCAPE WHO HAS COME TO ATTACK THEM”

The Greek historian Herodotus, who visited Scythia in the fifth century BC, described many Scythian customs, noting their aptitude for mounted warfare. They were archer-horsemen extraordinaire, who met and bested armies from such formidable foes as Assyria, the Medes, and Darius I of Persia. From Herodotus we know that Scythian armies were composed of the general citizenry, who presented the heads of slain enemies for shares of won bounty. They kept the scalp skin as trophies, sometimes using the skins as napkins or

Right: *The map shows the Roman Empire as it was under Hadrian. The Scythians lived along the north shore of the Black Sea and the Sarmatians in the south Russian steppes.*



sewing them into cloaks; the skulls might be kept as drinking cups. Herodotus also reports that upon their first kill, new warriors should drink their combatant's blood, and gives similarly titillating insight into sacrificial customs. Yet, the historian, generally disparaging of the Scythians, was forced to admit that in martial terms they bested everyone else: “None can escape again who has come to attack them, and if they do not desire to be found, it is not possible to catch them” (Histories IV.45). This is precisely what the Scythians did to Darius, luring him on a cat-and-mouse chase all the way to the Danube.

## THE SARMATIANS

In 339 BC, King Atheas of Scythia died in battle against the Macedonians. By the beginning of the second century BC, the Scythians were in full retreat into the Crimea; King Mithridates IV of Pontus finished them by 106 BC. A related people immediately replaced the Scythians, however. The Sarmatians, who had invaded Scythian territory as early as 350 BC, were, like the Scythians, accomplished riders and ferocious foes who threatened Roman possessions more than once. The Sarmatians vanished by the sixth century AD, but many other fierce, mounted warriors of the steppes would follow them to threaten all the nations of Eurasia.

Above: *Much of the surviving information about the Scythians comes from the writings of the Greek historian Herodotus and the Greek poet Ovid, shown here among the Scythians.*



# CIMBRIAN WAR

In 113 BC a Roman consul in Macedonia mounted an ill-advised attack on the Cimbri, a tribe that had run afoul of the Taurisci, who were allied with Rome. The resulting Battle of Noreia ended in complete victory for the Cimbri, and in humiliation for the Romans. While this first encounter occurred in the Balkans, it soon became clear the Cimbri were on the move. For reasons unknown (ancient writers credit a great flood, which appears unlikely), the Cimbri left their homeland in Jutland by around 120 BC. Wandering throughout western Europe they invariably caused trouble wherever they went and were perhaps the most formidable opponents of all the “barbarian” peoples to challenge Roman hegemony.



Above: *The tribes of the Cimbri crossed the Alps near Trent and invaded the Veneto, whose mild climate and delicacies reputedly sapped their strength.*

## The Cimbrian War

For the marauding Cimbri the destruction of the Roman army at Noreia opened a clear path to the defenseless wealth of northern Italy. But rather than turn south, they went west to Gaul, where they fought with the various Celtic tribes living there. (The Cimbri may themselves have been Celtic, although they were more likely Germanic; no agreement on the question exists.) Joining the Teutones and Ambrones, who also came from Jutland, the Cimbri formed the core of a monstrous army, reported by Plutarch to number 300,000 warriors, with additional women and children. Strabo, a Roman geographer, speaks of Cimbri seeresses, old and dressed in white, slashing the throats of prisoners-of-war and reading omens from their blood or from their entrails.

A second Roman defeat at the hands of the Cimbri, this time in the nearby Rhone valley in 109 BC, did nothing to pacify fears of an invasion of Italy. Again, however, the tribesmen turned aside—except for the Celtic Tigurini. The Tigurini handed the Romans their third major defeat, near Tolosa, in 107 BC. A new army formed, with two Romans placed in command—one patrician, one plebian—and the upper-class patrician refused to work with his lower-class colleague. As a result, the fourth and most significant defeat of a Roman army in the Cimbrian War (and one of the worst defeats ever suffered on the barbarian frontier) occurred at Arausio in 105 BC, where the Cimbrians simply dealt with the divided Roman army one half at a time. Rome lost at least 80,000 soldiers to patrician arrogance and Cimbrian swords.

Yet, still the tribesmen did not attack Italy proper. The Cimbri first traveled westward to Spain, while their allies, the

Teutones, went back to Gaul. Finally, in 102 BC the dreaded assault occurred on Italy proper, the two allies joining forces once again. By now, however, Gaius Marius had assumed command, making sweeping structural changes to the Roman army, and in a reversal of Arausio, he managed to divide the invading forces. The Teutones and Ambrones, traveling together, were defeated decisively by Marius at the Battle of Aquae Sextiae; the Cimbri made it over the Alps to the Po River, where they spent the winter. The following summer, however, Marius, having rejoined the forces he left to defend the Alps, utterly destroyed the Cimbri army. Fought on July 30, 101 BC, the Battle of Vercellae reportedly cost the Cimbri 100,000 men. After that, Marius was known as the savior of Rome.



Above: *The Battle of Vercellae took place at the confluence of the Sesia and Po Rivers. In the devastating defeat both Cimbrian chieftains, Lugius and Boiorix, died. The Cimbri were annihilated, although it is possible that some may have survived and returned to Jutland.*



Above: *The Greek geographer, philosopher, and historian Strabo (c. 63 BC–AD 24) produced Geographica, a valuable source of information on the ancient world. The map at the far right shows Europe as he depicted it.*



Left: *The Battle of Vercellae by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo illustrates the great victory of Gaius Marius over the fierce Cimbri that saved Rome from conquest.*



# ATTILA THE HUN

From their homeland between the Black and Caspian Seas, in the fourth and fifth centuries AD the Huns swept westward with a sudden unstoppable fury, ravaging the crumbling Roman Empire from Cappadocia to Gaul. The Huns, like other Eurasian steppe peoples, were master horse-archers (the stirrup, a revolutionary piece of equestrian equipment, likely came to Europe via the Huns) and followed a nomadic lifestyle.



*Attila is shown leading the invasion of Italy. Famine, which left him without the necessary supplies for continued warfare, disease among his troops, and military defeat prompted Attila to negotiate peace and return home.*



## The Hephthalites

Around the same time as Attila's reign of terror, in the east another nomadic people called the Hephthalites made inroads into Persia and India. The relationship between the Hephthalites and the Huns has never been satisfactorily concluded, but they shared considerable territory in central Asia, from which the Huns went west and the Hephthalites south and east. (A Far Eastern third branch of the Hun family may be found in the Hsiung-nu, who appear in Chinese records beginning in the third century bc.)

The Hephthalites' first homeland, according to a second-century AD Chinese source, was Dzungaria, but by the fifth century they primarily operated out of central Asia. In the 420s they began frequent raids into the Sassanid Empire of Persia; these halted in 427 after a decisive Sassanid victory, only to lead to a massive Hephthalite invasion thirty years later. In 469 the Hephthalites defeated the Sassanid emperor Peroz in a large battle; the following year they conquered Gandhara; by 480 they had added Sogdiana, Kashgar, and Khotan to their possessions and began invading India. The peak of Hephthalite power came in 522, with territories from Dzyngaria to northern India, but the empire collapsed quickly after that. In 532 a coalition of Hindu peoples expelled them from India and the Hephthalites disappeared altogether after unsuccessful wars against the Sassanids that took place between 557 and 561.

*Above left: The Feast of Attila depicts his last marriage, which was also the night of his death. The cause of death is unclear: some accounts say that he died of choking or a hemorrhage, others that he was murdered by his wife or political enemies.*

## THE SCOURGE OF GOD

Probably the most famous Asian nomad in history, and certainly the most famous Hun, Attila was king of the Huns from about AD 434 to 453. The Huns began invading the eastern half of the Roman Empire in the late fourth century AD, but it was not until Attila that they made their lasting impression upon Europe. By this time, having settled in what is today Hungary, the Huns in some respects resembled the Western peoples upon whom they made war, and who demonized them in return.

From AD 441 to 448 they burned and pillaged the Balkans, exacting tribute from the eastern emperor at Constantinople and stopping only at Thermopylae. In AD 450 Attila received one of history's most unlikely marriage proposals—from Honoria, the western emperor's sister. When the emperor refused to hand her over Attila invaded western Europe. Strasbourg, Worms, Mainz, Cologne, Trier, Rheims, Tournai, Cambrai, Beavais, and Amiens all burned in his wake: Orleans was next in line, but before it could be destroyed Attila suffered his only military defeat at Châlons-sur-Marne (or Catalaunian Plains). Attila proceeded into Italy, smashing Aquileia (whose survivors escaped into the swamps, there to found the new city of Venice), Padua, Pavia, Verona, Vicenza, Bergamo, Brescia, and Milan—which he unaccountably spared. Rome was saved by an appeal from a deacon named Leo, future pope and saint, and Attila turned around. After his death in AD 453 the Huns disintegrated, leaving a traumatized Europe behind them.

*Left: After Attila (as shown in the Norse Poetic Edda) died his three sons divided up the empire and fought over who would be high king. The Huns' subject tribes broke free from the empire one by one. Only a year after Attila's death the Goths defeated the Huns at the Battle of Nedao.*





# SACKINGS OF ROME

It is difficult, in some respects, to pinpoint the date, or even the century, that the Roman Empire “fell.” By the end of the third century AD, the Roman domain had split in two; the eastern half, known as the Byzantine Empire after its capital at Constantinople (formerly Byzantium), survived until the fifteenth century (see page 191). In the West, the empire crumbled slowly but dramatically. Most historians would point to specific events in the fifth century as emblematic of Rome’s collapse.

## ROMANS AND BARBARIANS

Strictly speaking, the “barbarian invasions” of the fifth century were not always invasions. The fifth century was an age of migration for Germanic tribes, who often came to settle, not conquer. In addition, the distinction between “Roman” and “barbarian” was hardly clear-cut: the Visigothic leader Alaric had served in the Roman army, while his Roman adversary General Stilicho was himself half Vandal.

Alaric became the Visigothic chief in AD 395 and, claiming that the Romans had not paid the fees they owed him, rampaged through Greece, until finally the Byzantine emperor bought him off. Alaric moved his operations west, where Stilicho overshadowed the weak Emperor Honorius. Stilicho met Alaric in battle at Pollentia—usually counted as a Roman victory, although Alaric retreated—on April 6, 402. He invaded again in 403, but again Stilicho checked him, even forming an alliance with him against Illyria.

Alaric remained quiet for several years. In the meantime Vandals, Alani, Burgundian, Alemanni, and others ravaged Gaul, then settled there and in Spain. In AD 408 Honorius executed Stilicho. Alaric promptly besieged Rome, attacking again in 409. In the summer of 410—after Honorius had fled to Ravenna—Alaric plundered the city for three days. The event had vast symbolic significance, for not since 390 BC had invaders seized Rome. Yet, despite later claims to the contrary, the Visigoths treated the city fairly gently, and upon their withdrawal settled in Gaul, becoming allies of Honorius, who in 415 sent them to Spain to combat the Vandals, Alans, and Suevi settled there.



Above: *The period of the barbarian invasions was a time of intense human migration throughout Europe and into North Africa. It also marks the transition from late antiquity to the early Middle Ages.*



Top: *The gold medallion portrays Licinia Eudoxia, who was held captive for seven years before Emperor Leo I paid a ransom for her release.*

## VANDALISM

By AD 455 the Western Empire lay in ruin. Britain and North Africa had been lost, Attila the Hun had ravaged Gaul and northern Italy, and weak, fractious Roman leaders contended with their rivals for power and control. In 455 the Vandal chief Gaiseric, who had seized northern Africa for himself, supposedly responded to a call for aid from Eudoxia, the widow of Emperor Valentinian III, who was being forced to marry his murderer, the usurper Maximus. For two weeks Gaiseric sacked Rome, taking plunder, slaves, and hostages, including Eudoxia herself. By now the various Germanic peoples had conquered or incorporated themselves into the Empire. The last Roman emperor, who would go unrecognized by his Eastern counterpart, ruled for barely a year before the German chieftain Odoacer deposed him in AD 476.

Left: *Gaiseric’s men are seen sacking Rome, a horrific event with lasting repercussions. Attempts were made to avenge the city, but all failed. Gaiseric ruled his portion of Africa ably for the next twenty-two years.*





# ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS

Britain was one of the last provinces conquered by Rome and one of the first abandoned in the midst of increasing political, economic, and military ferment in the late Roman Empire. Most legions left the island in the first decade of the fifth century AD, opening the door to the Irish, Pictish, and, especially, Germanic tribes surrounding it. This coincided, not entirely coincidentally, with the Migration Age (c. AD 300–600), which saw large-scale movements of Germanic, Scandinavian, and other “barbarian” peoples, generally from east to west. According to tradition, it was a British (that is, Romano-Celtic) king who first invited Germanic tribes to come to the British Isles; without the legions, he needed help defending his kingdom.

## THE INVASION OF BRITAIN

Whatever the proximate cause, in the early fifth century Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and other Germanic peoples from the Jutland peninsula and northern Germany began settling the southern and eastern coasts of Britain. Their arrival and subsequent takeover of the island of Britain had major and lasting consequences, with effects that remain visible to this day, perhaps most obviously in language: most Britons spoke Celtic languages before the arrival of the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles. The dominance of English, a Germanic tongue, and indeed the very name “England,” are legacies of the fifth-century invasion.

The Germanic peoples warred and settled westward across Britain, pushing the Celts into Scotland, Cornwall, and, especially Wales, where the first legends of King Arthur appeared around the eighth century. It was not long before this semihistorical, semilegendary, semimythical king became the leader of the embattled Celts, mounting a rousing defense against the marauding Saxons, in literature, if not in fact. “Arthur’s” war against the Germans culminated in the Battle of Mount Badon, a historical event occurring either in the late fifth century or as late as 517, in which the British leader—Aurelius Ambrosius, according to Gildas, a sixth-century British historian—finally stilled the rising Germanic tide.

Opinions vary as to the scale of migration, the extent of military activity, and the fate of the native British populations, and the actual history of migration into Britain, as well as the subsequent establishment of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, depend on a careful reading of available texts and archaeology. There is clearly no one-size-fits-all narrative. Nevertheless, by the end of the migration period, the political, cultural, and social transformation was complete and the formation of several Anglo-Saxon kingdoms was well underway. Over the next several centuries these kingdoms—the most powerful of which were Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, East Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex—would struggle with each other in a shifting and uncertain balance of power.



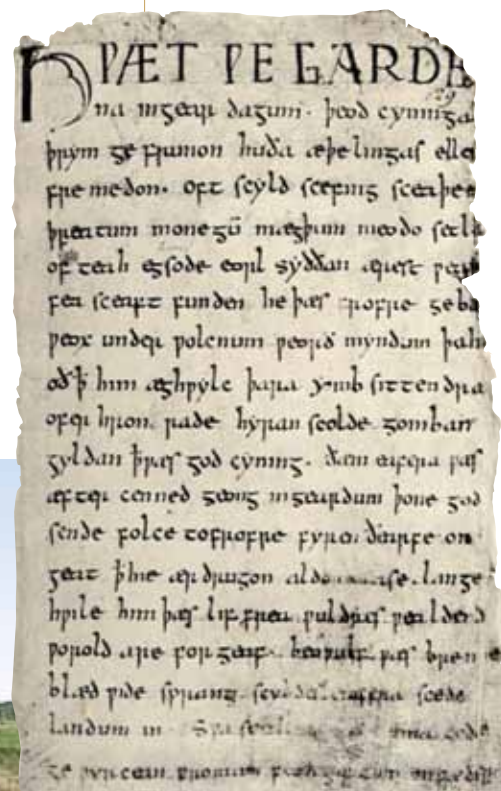
Above: In Arthurian legend, King Arthur epitomized the triumph of good over evil. His famous Knights of the Round Table, too, were portrayed as men of courage, honor, dignity, courtesy, and nobleness. Chivalry, or the chivalric code, is associated with medieval knights.

Below: The sixth-century burial mounds and rich grave goods at Sutton Hoo (near Woodbridge, England) speak eloquently to the influx of Germanic culture.



## Beowulf

One of the world’s most famous epic poems, *Beowulf* was authored between the seventh and tenth centuries. Although written in Old English, the events depicted in the poem take place in Scandinavia. They paint a somewhat nostalgic portrait of a heroic age as envisioned by Anglo-Saxons in early medieval England. Beowulf, the eponymous hero, is a larger-than-life character whose enormous strength and unflinching bravery enable him to defeat a monster and take the kingship of the Geats (the people of modern Götaland, Sweden). As befits a Scandinavian-Germanic hero, he dies in battle. Literary evidence suggests that a warrior who died of old age died in shame.



Above: Housed at the British Library, only one copy of the original manuscript of *Beowulf* exists. It is the longest epic poem written in Old English, the language spoken in Anglo-Saxon England before the Norman Conquest.



# VIKINGS

From the eighth to the eleventh centuries, Norse-speaking raiders from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden—and, later, England, Ireland, northern France, and western Russia—wreaked havoc from the Baltic to the Mediterranean and across the North Atlantic to Newfoundland, Canada. The Vikings targeted rich, poorly defended religious houses, with the result that modern scholars have a wealth of contemporary written information about them, all of it recorded by their victims, and as a result Vikings are stereotypically considered brutal, pillaging warriors. Of course, the Vikings often were brutal, pillaging warriors, yet this image is incomplete. In general, Vikings followed a pattern: they would raid an area, often over the course of several decades, then send permanent settlers, then follow up with armies who would sometimes conquer larger areas or insert themselves into local politics. By the end of the Viking Age, typically dated to the Battle of Stamford Bridge, in 1066, Scandinavia had converted to Christianity, and Scandinavian kings resembled their Continental counterparts. The Vikings had settled down.

## OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS

Just why the Vikings started raiding remains a mystery. Precisely when they started is also unclear. Their first recorded raid, at Lindisfarne, off the English coast, in 793, was likely not their first in fact. The British Isles remained a favorite Viking target for eighty years or so after Lindisfarne, although, by the middle of the ninth century, the Frankish empire had also received a fair share of raids. By the end of the ninth century, Vikings had conquered or extorted territories in both, but at that point local kings had begun fortifying their kingdoms against the raiders.

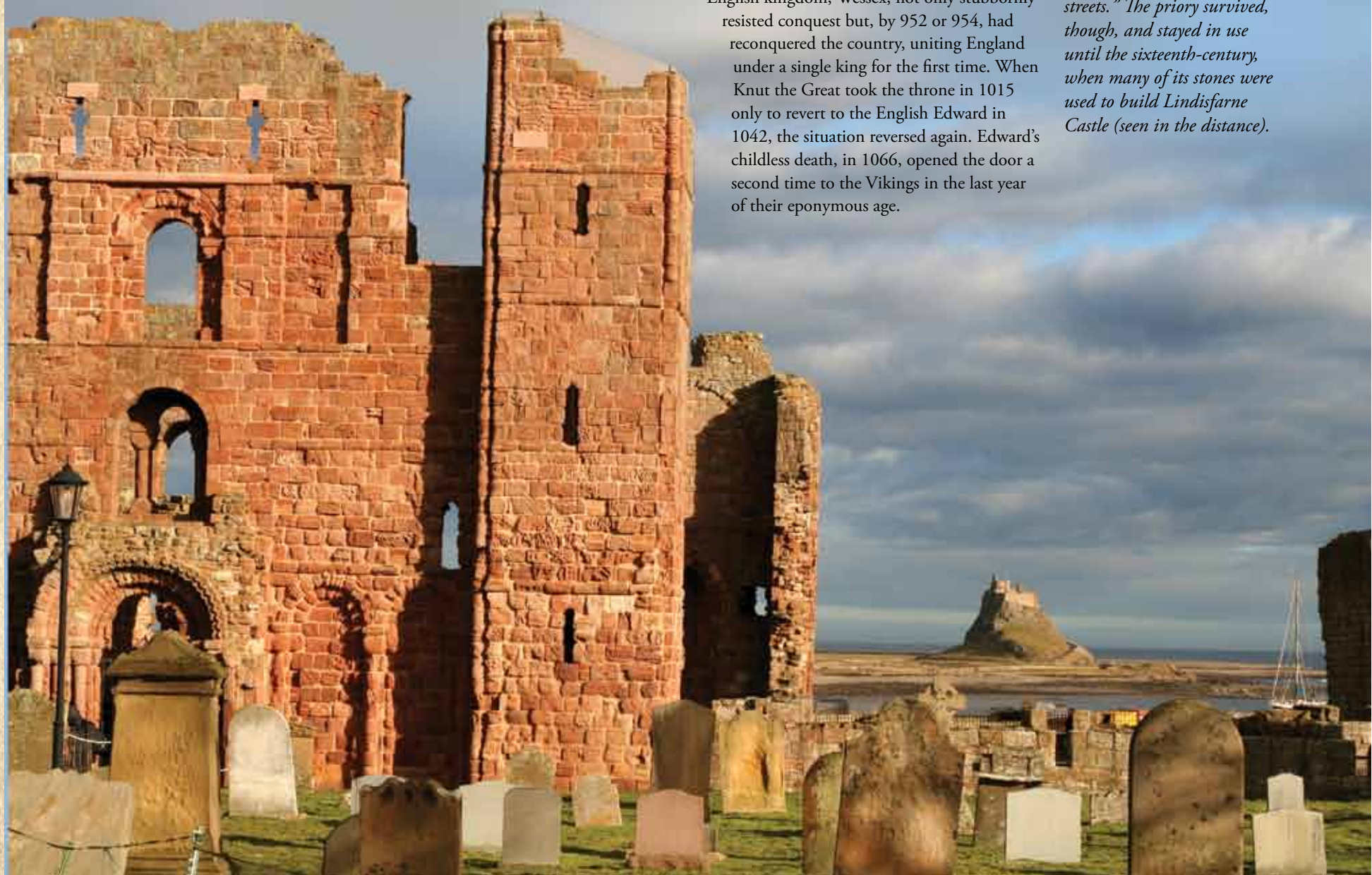
In the east, Swedish Vikings settled in Russia (and in fact gave their name, *Rus*, to the country), raiding and trading down the great rivers of Eastern Europe. In 860, they attacked Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, whose

emperors quickly hired the mercenary Swedes as a personal, elite troop of bodyguards, called the Varangians. Vikings raided as far away from their homeland as North Africa, conquering Sicily and parts of southern Italy and establishing a short-lived colony in Canada.

For Vikings, rivers like the Seine, the Volga, and the Dneiper were highways. Viking ships, the best in Europe, could transverse seas or rivers with equal ease. Portage through wooded areas, however, necessary when river rapids prevented ships from passing, was sometimes required. Although their reputation as warriors is sometimes overblown, the Vikings were, in fact, formidable fighters, armed with axes, swords, bows and arrows, and spears. Nevertheless, they were not always successful.

In England, for instance, a large Viking army succeeded in conquering Northumbria, East Anglia, and parts of Mercia between 865 and 870, but the remaining English kingdom, Wessex, not only stubbornly resisted conquest but, by 952 or 954, had reconquered the country, uniting England under a single king for the first time. When Knut the Great took the throne in 1015 only to revert to the English Edward in 1042, the situation reversed again. Edward's childless death, in 1066, opened the door a second time to the Vikings in the last year of their eponymous age.

*The ruins of Lindisfarne Abbey. The 793 raid on Lindisfarne signaled for many the beginnings of a terrifying era. The scholar Alcuin of York writes of the panic created by the pillaging of the priory: "Never before has such terror appeared in Britain as we have now suffered from a pagan race. . . The heathens poured out the blood of saints around the altar, and trampled on the bodies of saints in the temple of God, like dung in the streets." The priory survived, though, and stayed in use until the sixteenth-century, when many of its stones were used to build Lindisfarne Castle (seen in the distance).*





# GREAT HEATHEN ARMY

The terrors of the Viking Age were forcefully brought home to England with the arrival of the Viking army, described by *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as a “great heathen army,” in the mid-ninth century. The army’s size is unknown, but scholars agree it numbered in the low thousands. As the Vikings had lately done on the Continent, in Ireland, and in other places, this army came not merely to raid but to conquer—or, to use their term, to “share out” the land wherever possible.



## The Danelaw

The Viking invaders’ mid-ninth century settlements were known as the Danelaw, a region that operated under Scandinavian-style law, whose Scandinavian residents bequeathed a number of place-names, linguistic features, and legal nomenclature, including the word “law” itself, to the English language. The Danelaw was not settled evenly, Scandinavians tending to cluster most heavily in the north; onomastic (place-name) evidence suggests their settlement thinned as they traveled farther south. Nor was the Danelaw a homogeneous entity in either political or social terms. However, it apparently retained a distinct enough cultural identity that, even after the Norman Conquest in 1066, legal documents refer to the “Danelaw,” while Danish, in some form, continued to be spoken in Northern England and Scotland for several centuries.

## THE GREAT HEATHEN ARMY

Led by Halfdan Ragnarsson and Ivar the Boneless, two sons of Ragnar (“Hairy-Breeches”) Loðbrok, the army arrived in 350 ships, according to the *Chronicle*, around 865. By this time, the major kingdoms in England and Wales numbered eight: Northumbria, Mercia, Middle Anglia, East Anglia, Kent, Wessex, Gwynedd, and Dyfed. In previous decades, the had Vikings struck at Sheppey, in Kent, and Carhampton, in Wessex; but the Great Heathen Army chose as their first target East Anglia, overwintering there and ransacking York, in Northumbria, the following year and killing two competing Northumbrian kings in the process. Staying in the north for the next two years, they moved to Mercia, back to Northumbria, then through East Anglia and back to Mercia again in the years following. By then, the governments of these kingdoms were a shambles, and the Vikings were able to settle and “share out” East Anglia to their satisfaction. Mercia and Northumbria seem

to have paid them off; with reinforcements (a “great summer army”), the Vikings next moved against Wessex, which proved a formidable obstacle.

A close battle at Repton, fought around 873, resulted in the deaths of at least 250 Vikings (their remains have been uncovered by archaeologists), but this seems to have made little difference in their activities in Mercia. That same year, or shortly thereafter, the Vikings drove the Mercian king into exile and shared the kingdom out; at that point, the army, most likely composed of both veterans and reinforcements, divided. Halfdan went back to Northumbria, which by the end of the decade had been thoroughly shared-out and settled; the rest of the Vikings set up a new base at Cambridge, in 874. Again, the Vikings attacked Wessex, without great success; two years later, after moving to Gloucester, in 878, they tried again. But this time, they encountered Alfred the Great and the Battle of Edington.

*A Viking ship rides the waves in a stained-glass window by Pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones. Through the centuries, images of these vessels, which carried the Great Heathen Army to foreign shores, have come to represent the entire Viking Age.*



# ALFRED THE GREAT

The man who finally halted the Great Heathen Army, preventing marauding Scandinavians from overrunning the entirety of Anglo-Saxon England, is still the only English king ever to be called “the Great.” Alfred I never expected to take the throne, even the throne of Wessex—he had four older brothers—but, in the course of his fifty-year lifetime, he not only gained Wessex’s throne but became the first king of “the whole English nation, except that part of it that was held captive by the Danes.” This part included, after several battles, Mercia and Kent, as well as Wessex. A project started during Alfred’s reign, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, provides an unusual amount of information about this medieval king, renowned as much for his law-making and wise administration as for his success on the field.

## A Question of Religion

King Alfred, a pious Christian, found himself agreeing with many contemporary ecclesiastics when he attributed the Viking raids to English impiety, which became a familiar charge throughout the Viking Age. Understood within the framework of Christian narrative, the Vikings were the devil’s scourge, sent by a God disappointed in the laxity of English religious practice. Though the Scandinavian countries had converted to Christianity by the end of the Viking Age, at least officially, the raiders who arrived with burning brands and raised swords were, almost without exception, pagan. Vikings were nothing if not opportunistic, however, and several Viking traders “took the cross” so they could trade in Christian Europe. And while King Guthrum converted under the terms of his surrender to King Alfred, the sincerity behind such coerced conversions may well be doubted.

## ALFRED AND AETHELRED

Alfred and his remaining brother, Aethelred, were jointly commanding the West Saxon army (that is, Wessex’s army), by 865, putting up the most determined resistance of any army to the Scandinavian invasion. Aethelred died in battle, in early 871, at Ashdown, one of nine major engagements that year. The *Chronicle* ends the entry rather gloomily: “This year also were slain nine earls, and one king; and the same year the West Saxons made peace with the army.” Alfred and his Saxons were beaten down, but not defeated.

They reappeared in Wessex, in 875; three years later, King Guthrum of the Viking force surprised Alfred at Chippenham in the middle of winter. This disastrous assault forced Alfred to retreat into the Sedgemoor marshes in Somerset, where he set up a camp on Athelney Hill. Meanwhile, another Viking army had attacked North Devon from Dyfed. Upon learning of this second army’s defeat by a Devon force, Alfred gathered his men and struck Guthrum hard at Edington, inflicting such serious damage that Guthrum was compelled to retreat to Chippenham, where the ensuing siege forced his surrender.

The Battle of Edington was the last step required to secure Wessex from the Viking threat. The Viking armies had shown some inclination to settle the territories they had already secured;



*Alfred the Great. Alfred’s success at ending the Viking invasion of the British Isles helped him earn his epithet, “the Great.”*

now, although intermittent raiding continued, the last major invading army had been broken. In addition, Alfred undertook sweeping military reforms as a result of the hard lessons he had learned at the hands of the Vikings: he reorganized his army, built new warships to guard the coast, and erected thirty strong fortifications. Though at heart he was a scholar—as an adult, Alfred learned Latin, translating several works into Old English—it was the king’s military abilities that enabled Wessex to survive, and with it much of England’s Anglo-Saxon culture.



Right: *The routes of the Viking journeys during the eighth to eleventh centuries took the invaders from their Norse homeland as far afield as North America to the west and and Russia to the east.*



# CNUT THE GREAT

The Vikings had not yet done with England. Raiding continued intermittently, despite Alfred the Great's defeat of King Guthrum, and there were also occasional invasions, the most significant force arriving in 1013 under the command of Sven Forkbeard, King of Denmark and de facto king of Norway. Forkbeard had raided in England before, but he had been obliged to shelve his ambitions while dealing with rebellious chieftains in his Danish and Norwegian lands. The reasons for his 1013 invasion remain obscure, but, whatever his motives, he arrived with a large fleet at Sandwich that summer, traveling to the Danelaw, securing the support of the Vikings there, and driving south against the English king, Æthelred (often called "the Unready," though a more accurate translation of his name is "the Ill-Advised"). Within a year, Æthelred had been driven into exile, but as soon as Sven Forkbeard died, in 1014, the English lords recalled Æthelred to the throne.



## THE NORTH SEA EMPIRE OF KNUT THE GREAT

Sven's army, located in Gainsborough, elected to follow his younger son, Knut, who had traveled with his father during the conquest (Sven's older son, Harald II, seized Denmark for himself, denying his brother his share in the kingship). Knut chose English conquest over dealing with affairs at home. First, however, he was driven away by Æthelred's resurgent army, and Knut was obliged to raise a new force in Scandinavia. Returning in 1015, he put in at Sandwich. At this point, however, instead of gathering strength in the Danelaw, however, Knut sailed to the mouth of the Frome River, plundering his way through Wessex and Mercia over the winter.

Early 1016 found him in York, in the heartland of the Danelaw, where he set sail again, mounting an impressive assault on London. Æthelred died in April 1016, and the defense of the country was left to his son, Edmund Ironside. Edmund was not entirely popular in England, having married a Danelaw noblewoman, with the result that some English nobles now fell in with Knut; but Edmund, who won his byname with his stiff defense of England, managed to reclaim Wessex, lifting the London siege. For the next year, Edmund and Knut fought vigorously, with the issue decided, in Knut's favor, at the Battle of Ashington on October 18, 1016. Edmund retained Wessex for a month before dying, whereupon Knut became sole ruler of England.

Harald II died in 1018, thereby enlarging Knut's domain considerably; but in 1026, King Olaf Haraldson (Olaf the

Holy) of Norway, King Anund Jakob, and a certain Ulf, Knut's brother-in-law and a Danish regent, joined in coalition against him. The Battle of Helgeå, in Sweden, ended badly for Knut, who retreated to England, where he ordered Ulf's murder. Knut had not given up, however, and, with English support, was able to take over Norway in 1028, having first driven Olaf into exile and later killing him at the Battle of Stiklestad. Knut's control over Sweden is debated; most likely, his Swedish support was restricted to Götaland and, less probably, the Svear at Sigtuna. In 1027, Knut rounded out his North Sea Empire with an invasion of Scotland, which won him lordship over at least a few of the kings there.

Knut is remembered respectfully in England, despite his brutal takeover. He admired English customs, English law, and the English church. Yet Knut's hard-won empire failed to outlast its creator. Within a decade of his death, in 1035, England had recovered the line of Æthelred. Knut's son, Hardeknud, ruled only Denmark until his death in 1042, whereupon the Danish throne passed to the son of the murdered Ulf.

*Above: Knut ruled England for nearly twenty years, affording the raid-weary populace respite from Viking raids and allowing the country to regain some of the prosperity it had lost in the tenth century.*

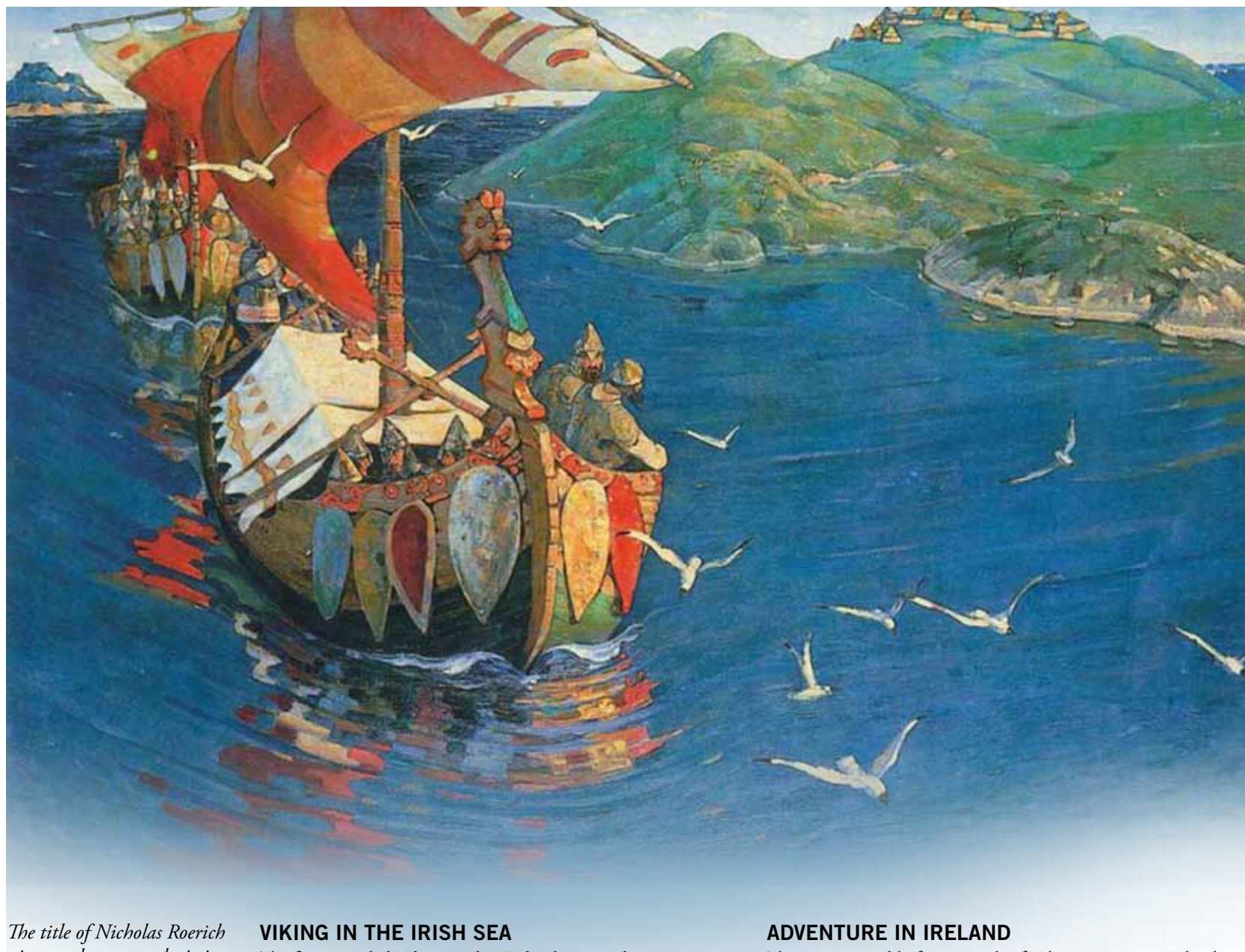
## The Battle of Maldon

In 991, a large Viking force, led by Sven Forkbeard and Olaf Tryggvason of Norway, landed in Folkestone with some ninety ships. This large raiding party, a precursor to Sven's 1013 invasion, plundered the southeast coast for two years, struck Northumbria in 993, futilely attacked London in 994, and remained in the south until 995. In their first year, the Vikings fought and won the Battle of Maldon against the forces of Byrhtnoth, an alderman (a high-ranking nobleman) of Essex. This event is commemorated in a heroic poem, *The Battle of Maldon*, which provides us with perhaps the most famous lines of Old English poetry, concerning the futile defiance of the prideful Byrhtnoth as he rallies his troops: "Mind must be the harder, heart the keener, spirit the stronger, as our strength lessens."



# VIKINGS IN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND

The Vikings are, perhaps, most famous for settling in North America five centuries before Columbus crossed the Atlantic. But their North American and Greenlandic settlements failed, the first quite quickly, the latter after several centuries. The Vikings had considerably more success in Iceland, which was unpopulated before their arrival, and in the British Isles, where residents suffered the full weight of the Viking onslaught.



*The title of Nicholas Roerich nineteenth-century depiction of Vikings heading toward a green shoreline, Guests from Overseas, is appropriate—although they came as raiders to Ireland in the eighth century, by the end of the Viking Age, many of the unwelcome guests had made Ireland their home.*

## VIKING IN THE IRISH SEA

The first recorded Viking raid in Ireland occurred in 795, on the island monastery of Iona, one of the holiest places in the entire Irish church. It was the first event in a pattern the Vikings were to follow successfully elsewhere: raids on coastal and island locations gave way to fortified settlements, followed by interior raiding, followed by attempts at conquest and assimilation. To the pagan Vikings, the wealth of Ireland's houses of worship, accumulated over the course of four centuries, was an easy target—at least at first. Politically fractured, with its competing kings and chieftains, monasteries, nunneries, churches, and cathedrals, Ireland almost never offered any defense.

It took about a month to travel by Viking ship from Scandinavia to Ireland. "Going a-viking" was a seasonal occupation, but early in the ninth century, Viking parties started wintering over in hostile territory, instead of returning home for the dark Scandinavian winter; they soon built fortifications and settlements. Little written record of Viking activity exists for Scotland, the Hebrides, the Orkneys, Shetland, and the other islands of the North Atlantic. In fact, however, onomastic and linguistic evidence proves heavy settlement in these places, predictably clustered on coasts, navigable rivers, and islands. Orkney, Shetland, and the Faroes were completely overrun by Vikings, while the northeastern-most tip of Scotland was heavily settled, presumably after the Viking siege and capture of Dumbarton in 870–871. The Vikings could reach Ireland with alarming ease from these closer bases.

## ADVENTURE IN IRELAND

There were roughly four periods of Viking activity in Ireland. From the first raids on Iona, in 795, Viking raiders used hit-and-run tactics against exposed targets on the coasts and islands. The second phase, which began in the 830s, witnessed a dramatic increase in the number raiders, who, at this point, began to overwinter as well. This unsettling development slowed, finally halting in the 840s when the Irish kings, awakening to the danger, besting the Vikings in several important battles. But by then the Vikings had put down roots. During phase three, roughly 850 to 914, the Vikings slowly lost their power to Irish kings, but they established themselves in Ireland as merchants and community participants. In 914, however—twelve years after the Irish expelled the Vikings from Dublin—a large fleet appeared in Waterford Harbor. This signaled the beginning of phase four, in which a powerful Viking king, based in Dublin, managed briefly to establish hegemony over the Hebrides, the Isle of Man, Scotland, and Northumbria. He was unable to hold York, Northumbria's capital, however, and soon the Viking kingdom of the North Sea faded, Dublin itself coming under jurisdiction of the Irish kings. By the end of the Viking Age, the Vikings were thoroughly integrated into Irish society and politics, leaving in their wake a few cultural markers, several place-names, and a few words in the Irish Gaelic lexicon.



# THE BATTLE OF CLONTARF

The Battle of Clontarf, once seen as the ultimate battle for control of Ireland between the Irish and the Vikings, does not, in fact, lend itself to simple, black-and-white analysis, its dramatic dénouement notwithstanding. Although the primary combatants were Brian Boru (Bóruma), the self-styled High King of Ireland, and King Sigtrygg of (Viking) Dublin, each side contained both Irish and Viking troops. Some historians, in fact, see one of Sitric's Irish allies, King Máelmórda mac Murchada of Leinster, as Brian's primary opponent.



*Brian Boru, High King of Ireland*

## MUNSTERMEN AND CONNACHTMEN

Sigtrygg Silkenbeard of Dublin was the son of an Irishwoman, Gormflaith, who later married Brian Boru; he was also the husband of Brian's daughter. This interweaving of family ties ensured Sigtrygg's collusion in Brian's wars to obtain the high kingship of Ireland, which indeed occurred, in 1011. Yet, only one year later, Sigtrygg joined the Northern Uí Néill and Leinster in rebellion. Why he did so is a matter of some historical conjecture, although both Norse and Irish literary sources, produced in the centuries following the actual events, blame the revolt on Gormflaith. According to Norse sources, Gormflaith incited her son, Sigtrygg; in Irish sources, she incites her brother, Máelmórda of Leinster.

In any case, in 1013 a battle broke out between Maéll Sechnaill, of the Southern Uí Néill, a rather unwilling ally of Brian's and a former challenger for the high kingship, and the Dublin Vikings. Brian lay siege to Dublin, to negligible effect, while Sigtrygg's son, Olaf, sailed south to Munster—Brian's home territory—burning a Viking settlement in Cork, thus eliminating Brian's ability to give battle on the seas. Meanwhile, Sigtrygg traveled to other Norse territories collecting support, including that of his most important Viking ally, Jarl Sigurd of the Orkneys—to whom, if the literary sources are to be believed, Sigtrygg offered Gormflaith, and with her, the kingship of Ireland. The Battle of Clontarf was joined on April 23, 1014. Maéll Sechnaill, withdrawing from his distasteful alliance with his

former rival, chose not to join the Dubliners, either; this modulated betrayal left Brian with only 4,500 men, mostly Munstermen, along with a few Connachtmen, from his mother's side of the family, and a few Viking mercenaries. Sigtrygg's forces, however, numbered far fewer, even with Jarl Sigurd and the King of Leinster behind him. Perhaps only 1,000 faced Brian, on a field called *cluain tarbh* ("the bull's meadow"), on the north bank of the Liffey River. Still, for the first several hours of the battle, they had the advantage; then, finally, Brian's forces broke through at Dubgall's Bridge, and the battle became a rout.

Jarl Sigurd and King Máelmórda both died, as did Brian's son, Murchad, his grandson Tairrdelbach, and Brian himself. With him died the last, best chance for Irish unification under a single monarch—although, as the composition of his troops shows, his claim to overlordship was tenuous at best, even at the height of his power. Irish and Norse sources each claim the battle as a victory; between the rise of Dublin as an economic power, the failure of the Norse to conquer the island, and the equivalent Irish failure to unite, however, whether anyone actually emerged victorious at Clontarf is something of an open question.

## The Four Fifths of Ireland

Well into the Middle Ages, Ireland remained tribal in social and political construction. A conservative, insular society, Ireland retained archaic cultural features and technologies, such as the use of chariots well after conversion to Christianity, far longer than most other Celtic regions of Europe. Not all purportedly "ancient" ideologies may be accepted as such, however. Consider, for example, the concept of a high king of Ireland, a notion prevalent in pre-Christian times and based at Tara, in the province of Mide ("Middle"). Mide may, in fact, have been one of the ancient regions of Ireland, the others being Connacht, Ulster, Leinster, and Munster. Only these last four are attested in the Early Middle Ages, although, confusingly, the Old Irish word for province is *cóiced*, "fifth." Although there were several grades of kingship, resulting in no fewer than 150 Irish kings at a time, provincial kings reigned at the highest level in Early Ireland. But when one dynasty—the Uí Néill—began to ascend in the fifth century, its adherents encouraged retroactive belief in a "high kingship" at Tara. They subsequently claimed, in the first decade of that century.

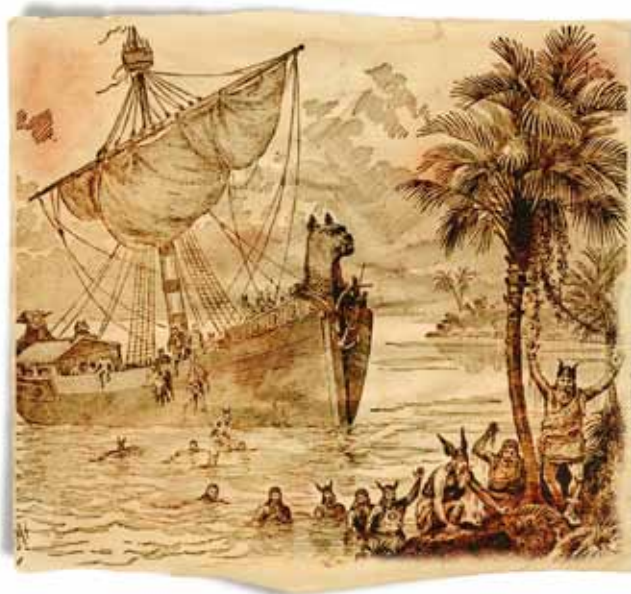


*Left: Who won and who lost at the battle of Clontarf remains an unanswered historical question, with both sides claiming a victory. Whatever the outcome, Brian Boru died at the Battle of Clontarf, thus ending the fragile Irish unity of his reign.*



# BATTLE OF STIKLESTAD

At the dawn of the Viking Age, Scandinavia was a patchwork of pagan kings and powerful jarls (earls); at its conclusion, the core Scandinavian countries we know today—Sweden, Denmark, and Norway—were unified kingdoms, resembling their continental counterparts in religion as well as political structure. Neither conversion to Christianity nor political unity came easily, and, in the shifting patterns of support and enmity characteristic of the late Viking Age, the two were often intertwined. In Norway, as powerful men with royal ambitions jostled for position, the result was often violence.



Above: *The Vikings were skilled seafarers, and their raids and settlements throughout Europe and the North Atlantic are testament to the seaworthiness of their ships. The longship, as seen above, was the culmination of centuries of development.*

## OLAF THE HOLY

Norway's patron saint, popular far beyond his native country during the Middle Ages, was known in death as Olaf the Holy. Yet, before he died, his countrymen scarcely thought well of him at all. Olaf belonged to a noble family descended from Harald Fairhair, who forcibly took over Norway in the late ninth and early tenth century (while Fairhair is considered Norway's first king, the country did not remain unified after his death). At

the time of Olaf's birth in 995, however, his family had lost control of the kingship, although they remained powerful—and pagan. In the tradition of young Viking noblemen, Olaf spent his youth raiding, apparently serving in both the Danish and the English armies. When Sven Forkbeard of Denmark, who also ruled Norway, forced Æthelred of England into exile (1013–1014), Olaf traveled with Æthelred to France, where, in Rouen, he converted to Christianity.

Sven's death, in 1014, and Knut's preoccupation with England left an opening in Norway, and, in 1015, Olaf arrived at the head of an army. Overcoming his stiffest opposition at the Battle of Nesjar, in 1016, Olaf set about shoring up support along the coast and in the north; he conquered outright, and converted, the more intractable interior. Ultimately, Olaf came

closer to establishing full control over more of what is now modern Norway than any of his predecessors, although enforced conversions and overbearing tactics cost him much support, especially in Trøndelag. By 1026, he had earned the ire of Knut and his powerful supporters in Norway, but, in a bid to counterbalance Denmark's great power, Olaf married the sister of Anund Jakob. The Battle of Helgeå ended with Knut's retreat, though some sources claim he had the victory. Confusion reigned during the combined land-sea fight, with perhaps more than 1,400 ships involved.

## Death at Trøndelag

Knut's setback proved temporary, however. He now moved against Olaf diplomatically, convincing the disaffected Norwegian nobles to support the Danish position instead. In his back pocket Knut had a powerful Norwegian, Håkon Eiriksson. Knut planned to have Håkon rule Norway as regent under him, an outcome preferred by many to Olaf's more tyrannical rule. In 1026, Knut returned to Norway with an army, and Olaf, whose nobles had abandoned him, fled to kinsmen at Kiev-Novgorod. But Håkon died en route to Norway, and, in early 1030, Olaf set out to reclaim his kingdom, backed by Russian and Swedish supporters. In the unfriendly region of Trøndelag, at a place called Stiklestad, Olaf—bearing a white shield with a cross of gold—battled Knut and his Norwegian supporters, losing both the battle and his life. Nevertheless, Stiklestad is viewed as a turning point in Norwegian history, for the Danish regent now imposed by Knut made himself so unpopular that Olaf Haraldson became Olaf the Holy, more influential in the unification of Norway in death than he had been in life.



Right: *Olaf II Haroldson of Norway (Olaf the Saint) is killed in the Battle of Stiklestad.*



# BATTLE OF HASTINGS

On October 14, 1066, the fate of Albion hung precariously between two armies. Was England destined to be ruled by Francophone Nords, or would it remain Anglo-Saxon? Would its politics entwine with the Continent's, or was the country to be isolated by language and ethnicity? Certainly, the men who fought that day, from the unknown soldier who delivered the fatal blow to Harold Godwinson, to the man now known as William the Conqueror, could not have felt the full weight of such momentous questions, discernible only in hindsight. Yet, momentous they were, and they were about to be decided on a small hill near Hastings in the course of a single day.



*The Normans were originally Norsemen who had settled in northern France. After the English were routed at the Battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror's followers became the new ruling class of England. The portrait above is of William the Conqueror.*



*Above: A panel from the Bayeux Tapestry depicting the death of King Harold at the Battle of Hastings.*

*Below: This scene from the Bayeux Tapestry shows a scene from the Battle of Hastings. The 230-foot-long embroidered cloth richly details the events of the Norman conquest of England.*

## HAROLD VERSUS WILLIAM

Edward the Confessor, king of England from 1042 to 1066, died childless, on January 5, 1066. Among his possible successors were his brother-in-law, Harold Godwinson of Wessex, his second cousin, the illegitimate William of Normandy, and King Harald Hardrada of Norway, supported by Harold's brother, Tostig Godwinson. The English noblemen backed Harold, crowning him on January 6, but his rivals had no intention of giving up so easily. After months of planning and assembling men and supplies, Harald struck first, landing three hundred ships near York, marching south in September.

Harold rapidly assembled his own army, quick-marching north from London. He surprised the Norwegians at Stamford Bridge on September 25, an unusually hot day. Many of Harald's forces had removed their armor in the sweltering heat. Taken by surprise, the Vikings nevertheless mounted a valiant defense, but Harold came away victorious, leaving Harald and most of his invasion force dead behind him.

Harold had no time to rejoice, however. On September 28 William landed his own, carefully prepared invasion force all the way on the other side of England. William had no more than 10,000, and possibly as few as 4,000 Normans with him. With 8,000 men of his own, Harold's forces roughly matched William's, but his men were tired from two long marches with a battle in the middle and, although they were supplemented by fresher local levies, William had almost no cavalry or archers.

## THE FATE OF ENGLAND

Harold positioned his infantrymen atop Senlac Hill, where they overlapped their shields, forming the well-known Anglo-Saxon "shield-wall." The shield-wall stood up to William's first cavalry charge, which was nearly routed off the field, but it proved vulnerable to William's archers. The opponents, fairly evenly matched, struggled for hours, the battle swinging first this way, then that. Gradually, however, William's persistence wore down the English. The shield-wall began to falter, as soldiers stopped to loot fallen enemies. Then, Harold himself received a mortal wound—possibly, as implied in the famous Bayeux Tapestry, an arrow in the eye. The wavering morale of Harold's troops broke, allowing William to take the field, and, with it, England.

*Below: William the Conqueror landing in England*





# VIKING WARSHIPS

Sailing ships represented the apotheosis of technology in the Viking Age. Marvels of medieval nautical engineering, crafted without saws and sailed without a compass, Viking ships plowed the North Atlantic, whose icy waters, foggy skies, and large waves have claimed more than one modern ship. The Vikings designed their warships to be light, fast, and, rather remarkably, capable of traveling either by sail or oar, thus ensuring a flexibility far outstripping anything offered by shipbuilders in the rest of Europe. Although Viking vessels tend to be equated with “dragon-ships” in the popular imagination, in fact the Vikings employed many different types of vessels, the result of shipbuilding techniques honed over three centuries. In addition, although Viking poetry does occasionally refer to *dreki* (“dragon”) ships, this is only one of several words used, the specific application of which troubles archaeologists trying to match terminology with the remnants of discovered ships.

## **Ormurin Langi**

One of the most famous Viking ships exists only in the saga literature of the thirteenth century, which nevertheless preserves snatches of older poetry. This is the ship of King Olaf Trygvasson of Norway, *Ormr hinn langi*, “the Long Serpent.” The largest Viking ship built to date, it hosted thirty-four pairs of oars, becoming famous for its role in Olaf Trygvasson’s climatic final sea-battle at Svold, a location that has yet to be determined. After hours of hard fighting, Olaf’s enemy, Jarl Eirik Hákonarson, finally managed to board the Long Serpent, at which point Olaf leapt to a watery death—a dramatic ending that has prompted legends throughout the Norwegian folk-world about his miraculous survival and eventual return. The event continues to inspire, as the popularity of *Ormurin Langi*, a Faroese ballad composed in the nineteenth century, and still performed today, attests.

*Shown above during its excavation in 1904–1905 and after restoration (above right), one of the most famous of Viking ships, the Oseberg ship was part of a ninth-century burial for a very high-ranking noblewoman, probably a queen, in Norway. Constructed around 820, the Oseberg ship offers important insight into the ship-building techniques of the early Viking Age. Finds such as this and others have guided the production of seaworthy replicas such as the ones shown at right and far right.*





## TRAVEL ACROSS THE VIKING WAVES

Although their terminology is difficult, we do know a fair amount about how Viking ships were constructed, what types there were, and how each type was used. This is due, in large part, to the pagan Viking custom of burying the nobility in large mounds, together with their ships, as well as to one remarkable discovery, made in 1962, of five ships scuttled in Roskilde Fjord, near Skuldelev, Denmark, in the late eleventh century. These include two warships, one of them, Skuldelev 2, the largest Viking ship yet discovered.

Skuldelev 2, at nearly one hundred feet in length, boasted some thirty pairs of oars and was capable of carrying approximately one hundred Vikings. Fashioned in Dublin around 1060, Skuldelev 2 would have been suitable for travel in the relatively calm waters of the Baltic Sea and south Scandinavia. Skuldelev 1 is represented by another kind of ship, the *knarr*, not a warship. Broader, deeper, and sturdier than Skuldelev 2, Skuldelev 1 was, rather, a cargo ship capable of making the ocean voyages necessary for travel across the North Atlantic. The other three Skuldelev ships include another, smaller, cargo ship, a smaller warship, and a fishing vessel.





# BATTLE OF POITIERS

In AD 711, a Berber commander from the newly Islamic territory in northern Africa, Tariq ibn Ziyad, sailed across the Mediterranean, landing in Spain at the mountain henceforth called Jebel al-Tariq (anglicized: Gibraltar). Tariq came to conquer, and within twenty years had established Al-Andalus, a Muslim enclave, which lasted until 1492. By 732, the Umayyad Empire stretched from Spain to Central Asia. Islam, which had emerged only a century before, seemed unstoppable.



Above: Tariq ibn Ziyad led the Islamic conquest of Spain.

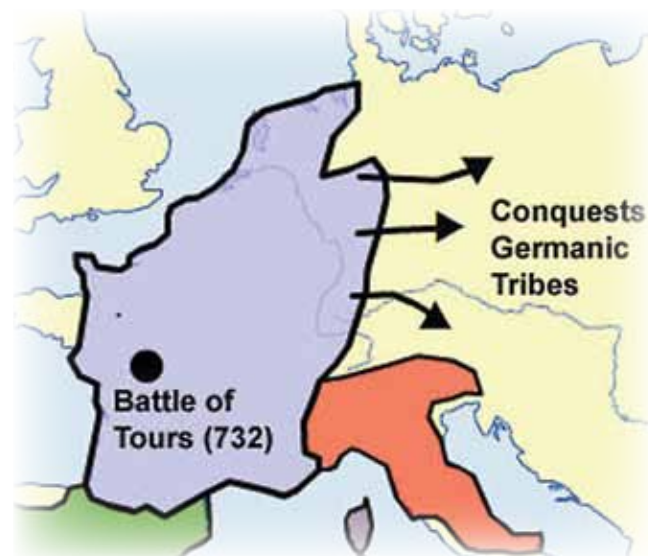


Above: A soldier in the distinctive dress of Charles Martel's Frankish army.

## ONE SATURDAY IN OCTOBER

The Battle of Poitiers, fought one Saturday in October somewhere between Poitiers and Tours, is remembered as one of history's great turning points, when the Frankish infantry under Charles "the Hammer" Martel stood, in the words of one medieval chronicler, as "a wall of ice" or "an unmovable sea," and finally, decisively, broke the advance of invading Muslim cavalry, thus ensuring the continuation of Christian Europe. The degree to which Martel deserves this reputation has come under some debate. For one thing, the Muslim troops at Poitiers, led by Abd al-Rahman, were not a conquering army, but rather a large raiding party; for another, Christian victories at Constantinople and Covadonga, Spain, both in 718, arguably played larger roles in halting the Islamic onslaught. Nevertheless, the unknown field in France—cautiously identified with Moussais-la-Bataille, 12.5 miles northwest of Poitiers—retains its symbolic value as the place where European Christians met and defeated the Islamic "threat."

Abd al-Rahman took perhaps twenty thousand to thirty thousand on his raid over the Pyrenees. Duke Eudo of Aquitaine had bested him before, at Toulouse in 721, but now, in 732, Abd al-Rahman routed him at the Garonne River, burning nearby Bordeaux, then defeating him again at Agen. Aquitaine lay defenseless before him. The invaders sacked Oloron, Auch, Dax, and Angoulême, then pressed on toward the rich cities of Poitiers and Tours. In the meantime, Eudo, swallowing his pride, approached Martel, an old enemy, for aid. Charles's official title (mayor of the palace of Austrasia, a section of the fractured Frankish kingdom), obscures the great power he wielded, augmented in 724 by his successful attack on Neustria. To his lasting credit, Charles responded quickly, marshalling an army of veteran Frankish infantry and marching them from Orléans to Cenon and on to Poitiers. His infantrymen assembled themselves in ranks across the road, known in later Arabian



Above: With their success at Poitiers, the Franks felt confident that Europe was safe from Islamic conquest and turned their gaze northward to begin their own conquest of the Germanic tribes that would lay the foundation for the coming Carolingian empire.

chronicles as "the road of the martyrs." The battle lasted only a day. Historians differ as to why Charles won; suppositions include heavier Frankish armor, stiffer Frankish discipline, and the desperation of homeland defense. However he did it, Charles won a crushing victory, killing some ten thousand Muslims to two thousand or three thousand Franks. Whether one accepts the Islam-versus-Christianity narrative, it is clear that Charles's Poitiers victory helped propel his regional rise to power, setting in motion the dynasty that would produce Charlemagne.



Left: The Battle of Tours gave Charles Martel the victory he needed to halt the Umayyad invasions of Europe.



# RECONQUISTA

Muslim and Christian armies battled for supremacy over the Iberian Peninsula (Muslim Al-Andalus) from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, in a contest gloriously dubbed the Reconquista (“reconquest”), of Spain. In 1492, just as Europe was discovering a new world across the Atlantic Ocean, victorious Christian monarchs finally swept the last Muslim leaders from Western Europe. It is also true that many at the time understood the Iberian wars in religious terms: for Catholic Christians, Spain constituted another front in the grand Crusading movement (see pages 180–183), while the Muslim Almoravids committed themselves to *jihad* against them.



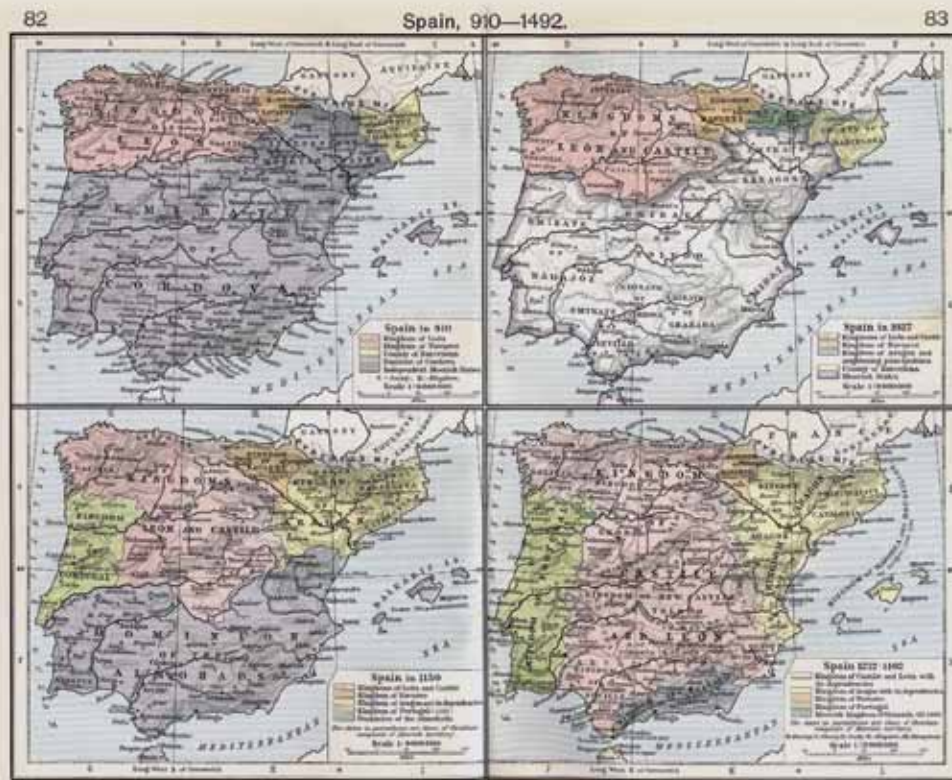
*Almoravid gold dinar coin from Seville, Spain, 1116. At its height, the Almoravid dynasty ruled all North-West Africa as far as Algiers, and all of Iberia south of the Tagus.*

## THE RECONQUISTA

The Reconquista arguably began in 795, when Charlemagne established the Spanish March, but for long centuries thereafter, Christianity in Iberia clung on precariously only in Iberia and Asturias. The Umayyad Caliphate had already collapsed everywhere else (see page 178), but, in Al-Andalus, it survived until 1031 as the Córdoba Caliphate. Asturias had already pushed south to the Duero River by 842; now Christian states were confronted with a golden opportunity, as the caliphate disintegrated into weak, petty kingdoms, often willing to pay off Christian invaders instead of fight. The Christian king of León, Alfonso VI, first attacked his brothers to unify León, Castile, and Galicia, then took Toledo in 1085. The loss of Toledo, then Spain’s largest city and the ancient Visigoth capital, could not be ignored. Desperate, the *taifa* (party) kings sought help from the Almoravid rulers of Africa, who had already conquered Morocco and Algiers, making inroads into Ghana.

The Almoravids wasted no time in crossing the Strait of Gibraltar, defeating Alfonso VI at Zallaka, in 1086. Subsequent victories at Consuegra, Cuenca, Valencia (against El Cid), Ucles, and Saragossa greatly extended the Almoravid empire, but the Iberian Arabs, who found the Almoravids nearly as distasteful as the Christians, soon commenced to fight them. Meanwhile, Portugal struggled to gain independence from León, which had conquered Navarre and Aragon by 1135. By now, the Almoravid empire was fracturing, beset by Portuguese at Ourique (1139), Sicilian Normans in Tunisia (1146–49), and a new Berber rival, the Almohads (from 1130). By 1207, the Almohads had taken all former Almoravid lands for themselves, but increasingly, now, the Crusades were on the rise.

The decisive point in the Reconquista came in 1212, when Alfonso VIII of Castile led a Crusader alliance to victory at Las Navas de Tolosa. Internal Muslim wars opened the way for Crusader victories at Córdoba (1236), Valencia (1238), and Seville (1248). The only remaining Muslim kingdom, Granada,



*Above: Four maps shows the shifting borders of Spain from AD 910 to 1492. El Cid’s most famous deed is the hard-won conquest of Valencia in 1094, which he ruled until his death in 1099. His recovery of the city was made poignant by its loss only three years later to the Almoravids; Christians would not win it back until 1238.*

thereafter paid tribute to Christian kings until 1492. At that point the “Catholic Monarchs,” Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, joint rulers of a Spain unified since 1469, took the city, completing the Reconquista.

## The Moorslayers

In the centuries of the Reconquista two Christian heroes stand out in the oral literature, epic poetry, and national memories of Spain and Portugal. One, El Cid, was a Castilian nobleman and warrior, whose exploits were memorialized in the twelfth-century epic poem, *El cantar de mio Cid* (The Song of the Cid); the other is none other than Saint James, an apostle of Jesus Christ who died in AD 44. Although the saint probably never visited the Iberian peninsula, his tomb was “discovered” in the ninth century in Compostela, Spain. Santiago de Compostela (Saint James of Compostela) thereafter enjoyed fame throughout the medieval world, attracting pilgrims from all over Europe. As the Crusading movement heated up in Iberia, Crusaders took as their patron this “native” saint, whom they called James *Santiago Matamoros*, Saint James the Moorslayer.

*The Capitulation of Granada by Francisco Pradilla Ortiz depicts Boabdil, the sultan of Granada, preparing to sign the truce with Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella that would complete the Reconquista.*





# BATTLE OF NICOPOLIS

By 1395, the Byzantine Empire, Rome's eastern descendant, retained but a small portion of its former glory. The rapidly expanding Ottoman Empire had taken the entirety of Anatolia and now invaded the Balkans, leaving Constantinople surrounded. In desperation, the Byzantine emperor, Manuel II, turned to the West for aid. It would mark the first time Western Europeans marched against the Ottomans, and the last time they marched on a major international crusade.



## On the Field of Blackbirds

Fought on July 28, 1389, on the "Field of the Blackbirds" at Kosovo between Murad I (father of Bayezid I), the first Ottoman Turk to call himself Sultan, and a Balkan coalition led by Lazar of Serbia, the Battle of Kosovo was a turning point in Turkish history and a defining moment for Balkan nations. The battle achieved mythic significance, despite many conflicting accounts, in the nationalistic search for collective identity that gripped the Balkans, especially in the nineteenth century. A Serbian knight slew Murad I, but the Serbian-led coalition army collapsed, leaving the Ottomans in possession of Thrace, Macedonia, southern Serbia, and Bulgaria. Much of Balkan history, not least the troubled relationship between Muslims and Christians, can be traced to that summer day on the Field of Blackbirds.

Below: *The Battle of Kosovo, depicted at top right, cost both Murad I and Lazar of Serbia their lives. Below is a map detailing the plan of battle.*

## THE LAST CRUSADE

Flush with success from his previous military engagements, the Ottoman Sultan, Bayezid I, vowed to water his horse at Saint Peter's altar in Rome. The insult, coupled with pleas for aid from King Sigismund of Hungary, as well as Manuel II, prompted both popes to put aside their differences and call for a crusade. In 1396, ten thousand French and Burgundian knights, with small forces also from England, Germany, and the Knights Hospitaller, joined King Sigismund's ten thousand and King Mercia of Wallachia, with his small army, in Buda.

## BAYEZID'S TRIUMPH

The crusaders did not try to conquer every city along the Danube, the great European river that was the grand prize in the struggle with the Ottomans; instead they moved quickly, intending to take Bayezid I ("the Thunderbolt") by surprise. Nevertheless, by the time they reached Nicopolis, on September 12, 1396, French forces had dwindled to six thousand as a result of desertion, illness, and the stationing men at garrisons.

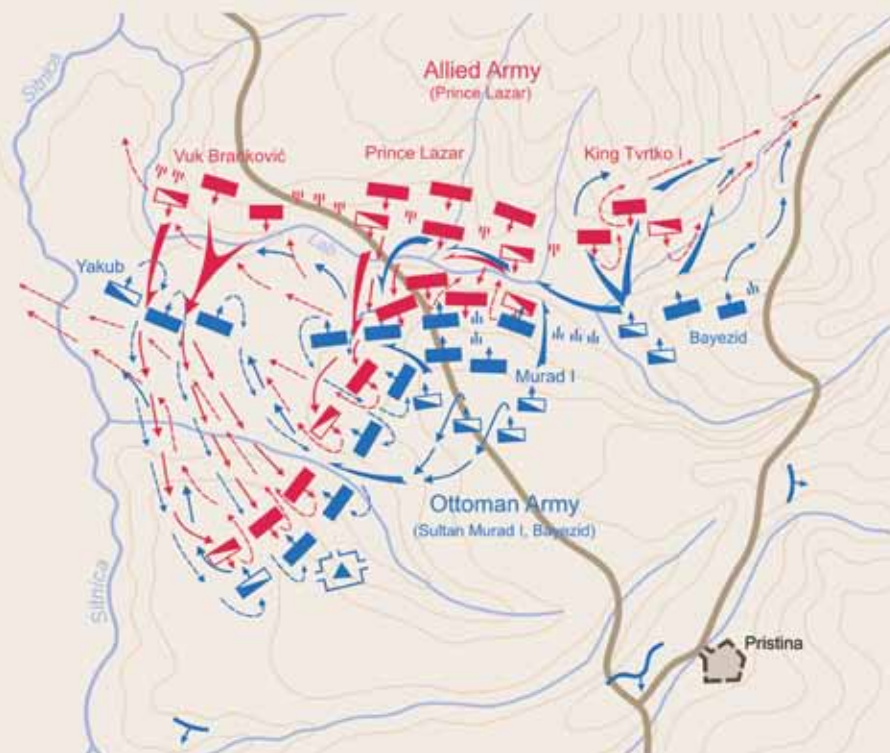
Bayezid I was not surprised. As crusaders besieged the city, fortified by a determined Muslim garrison, he brought his army from Constantinople, massing them on a hill within sight of the Crusader camp. Battle was joined on September 25. With overwhelming hubris, the French leader, John of Nevers, insisted, over Sigismund's objections, on charging Bayezid's forces. The French charge scattered the Ottoman light cavalry, but Janissary archers easily decimated the knights. Nevers had not waited for Sigismund to



Above: *King Sigismund of Hungary at the Battle of Nicopolis. After his victory, Bayezid toured the battlefield, hoping to find the corpse of Sigismund. Bayezid later executed thousands of the defeated crusaders.*

position himself, and the Hungarians were too late to save them. Nicopolis's garrison, seizing the moment, attacked. Sigismund escaped, but the last Crusade ended in utter devastation.

Bayezid I did not, however, manage to conquer Constantinople or overrun Europe, as he might have done in the wake of Nicopolis. Instead he fell in battle against Timur, the great Turkoman conqueror, on July 28, 1402, at Angora (Ankara).



Above: *Bayezid I imprisoned by Timur after the Battle of Ankara. Timur's victory over Bayezid ensured his position as preeminent leader of the Muslim world.*



# 

Dissatisfaction with a corrupt Catholic hierarchy. Feuding and politicking popes and “anti-popes.” A downtrodden peasantry’s surging nationalistic fervor. In the fifteenth century, at the beginning of the Modern Period, these factors began to coalesce, erupting, a century later, in the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic Counter-Reformation, and the Wars of Religion that engulfed Europe for more than a century. Martin Luther, the most famous reformer, was, in fact, merely the loudest in a chorus of dissenting voices. One of his most significant predecessors in this regard was John Huss, the Rector of Prague University, whose followers—called Hussites—played a significant role in both Christian and military history.



*Martin Luther nails his Ninety-Five Theses to the doors of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, an act that sparked the Protestant Reformation.*



*Above: John Huss delivers a sermon at Bethlehem Chapel in Prague. Huss used his pulpit to attack the morals of the clergy, episcopate, and papacy.*

*Left: The execution of John Huss. Condemned as a heretic by the Council of Constance in Switzerland, Huss died chained to a stake and set afire. The horror of his death drove his followers even further from the papacy and the teachings of the Catholic Church.*

## 

Reacting, in particular, to the sale of indulgences to fund a disreputable war (a practice Luther also derided), John Huss began, in 1412, to preach strongly against the custom, and to suggest liturgical and other reforms. Excommunicated, he traveled the countryside, wrote, and preached to an supportive populace dissatisfied both with the Catholic Church also with its secular arm, the Holy Roman Empire, whose German-speaking aristocracy increasingly alienated the Czech-speaking peasantry.

Accused of heresy, Huss was burned at the stake in 1415, at which point Bohemia and Moravia, Hussite hotbeds, exploded. Despite their peasant base, the Hussites proved formidable foes on the battlefield, thanks largely to their military leader, John Ziska, a brilliant tactician, whose use of field artillery and the *wagenburgen*—a kind of mobile fortress—allowed the Hussites to take victory after victory against the aristocracy’s cavalry.

No fewer than five crusades were called against the Hussites, to little effect, even after infighting began between two rival groups, one radical, one moderate, in 1423. In 1431, the Catholic Church capitulated on one of the Hussites’ key demands for liturgical reform. The moderates caved in; the radicals fought on. Their subsequent defeat, at the Battle of Lipany in 1434, opened the door to lasting peace, formally declared by King Sigismund in 1436.

## 

In 1517, a dissident German monk named Martin Luther published his *Ninety-Five Theses*, which protested various abuses he perceived in a lax and corrupt clergy. The result was the Protestant Reformation, a far-reaching movement that significantly affected the course of European history. From the 1520s until the mid-seventeenth centuries, Catholic and Protestant warred across an increasingly scarred Europe, spawning several major conflicts, among them the Thirty Years’ War, the English Civil War, and the Scottish Civil War. Intermittent violence occurred in nearly every European region, but the Holy Roman Empire suffered the most extensive damage.

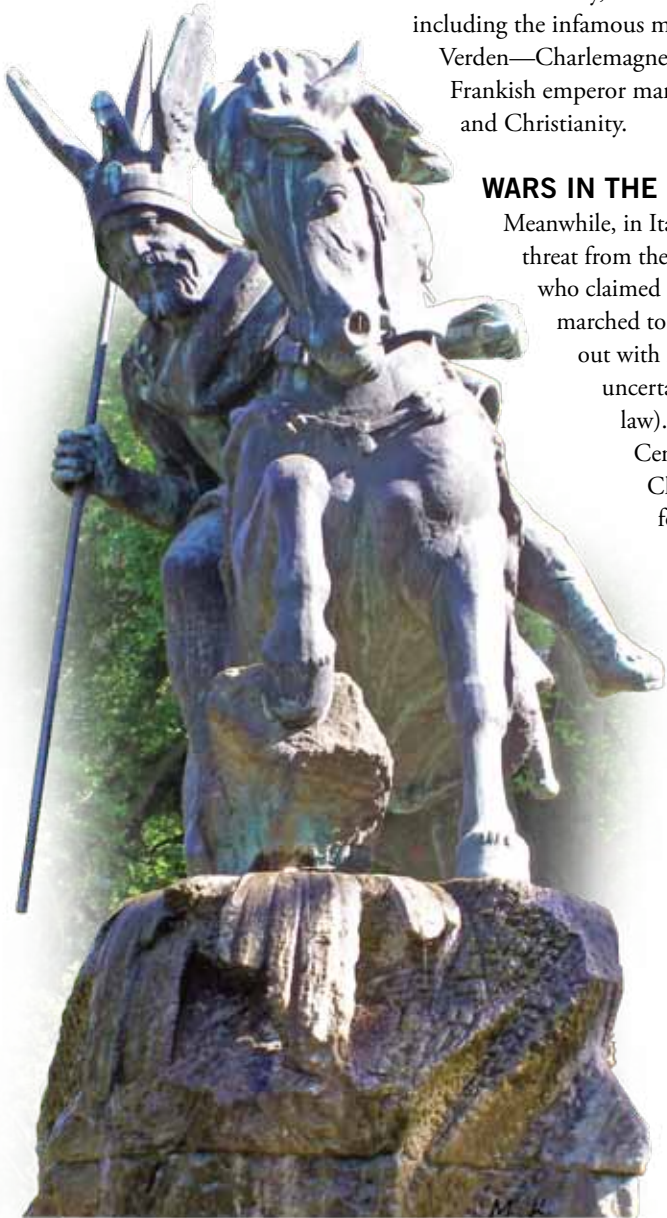
Politically, the confusion resulted in the rise of the Hapsburg dynasty, which would play a major role in Europe going forward. Militarily, the several Wars of Religion saw gunpowder coming fully into its own, the growth of infantry (together with the diminishing importance of cavalry), and the eradication of the old medieval system of warfare, where armies of landed gentry fought when obligated, then went home afterward. The emerging nations would now fund standing armies of professional soldiers, which soon grew to unprecedented size.



# CHARLEMAGNE

When Peppin III, son of Charles Martel, died in AD 768, he followed Frankish tradition in dividing his realm between his sons. Peppin was the first of his dynasty, taking the former Merovingian crown through papal degree, although the Carolingian dynasty is actually named for his son, Charlemagne, one of the greatest medieval kings. Charlemagne fought endlessly to expand his rule, and the subsequent death of his brother, in 771, did nothing to curb his ambition. Although ruthless and dedicated to the arts of war, Charlemagne was devoted to his children, the Church, and civil projects.

*Charlemagne, also known as Charles the Great, was king of the Franks from 768 and emperor of the Romans from 800 to his death in 814.*



### CHARLEMAGNE'S SAXON WARS

Charlemagne's implacable foes, the Saxons, were a pagan Germanic people who lived between the Rhine and Elbe rivers in what is today northern Germany. Charlemagne's motivations in his first campaign against the Saxons in 772 remain unclear. His destruction of the Irminsul, for example, a holy Saxon sanctuary, suggests he may have already been viewing the struggle in religious terms, although he also captured the more prosaic fortress at Eresburg. For much of the next three decades, Saxon raids followed Frankish assaults, aimed primarily at Christian churches. Every summer, Charlemagne would advance into Saxon territory, claiming hostages and collecting oaths; every winter, the Saxons would renege and counterattack. Yet slowly, with bloody losses on both sides—including the infamous massacre of 4,500 Saxons at Verden—Charlemagne advanced, until, by 805, the Frankish emperor managed to impose both his rule and Christianity.

### WARS IN THE EAST, WEST, AND SOUTH

Meanwhile, in Italy, the pope faced a renewed threat from the king of Lombards, Desiderius, who claimed ownership of Rome. Charlemagne marched to the rescue, having already fallen out with Desiderius, at one point an uncertain ally (as well as his father-in-law). Crossing the Alps at the Mont Cenis and Great St. Bernard passes, Charlemagne routed Desiderius's forces at Susa, claiming important hostages at Verona and finally bringing Lombardy to its knees with a six-month siege of Pavia, the capital.

One of Charlemagne's other relatives, Duke Tassilo III of Bavaria, also fell out with the Frankish king. Tassilo was a cousin to Charlemagne twice over, once through marriage, but Tassilo's wife was Desiderius's daughter. In 787, Charlemagne took three armies into Bavaria, where Tassilo, faced with overwhelming Frankish might, capitulated on the Lechfeld. In the following decade, Charlemagne dealt with the Avars, an Asiatic people who had been good neighbors to Tassilo. At first,



*Harun al-Rashid, the fifth Arab Abbasid Caliph, presents a gift to Charlemagne. Because of its ticking sounds and hourly chimes, Charlemagne believed it was a conjuror's trick.*

the Avars simply retreated before Charlemagne's armies, denying them victory, but Charlemagne's son, Pepin, took the so-called Ring Fort in 796, seizing the Avar treasury; the Avars, weakened, submitted thereafter.

Charlemagne had less luck in Spain, where Gascon or Basque forces decimated the army of his nephew Roland (later memorialized in *The Song of Roland*) at Roncevalles in 778. In 801, however, Frankish forces took Barcelona and established the Spanish March as a militarized buffer province between Christian Europe and Muslim Spain.

*Below: Europe in the age of Charlemagne.*



768	769	771	772–785	773–774	778	782	787	791; 795; 796	792–805	800	814
Peppin III dies	Charlemagne puts down Aquitaine revolt	Carloman, Charlemagne's brother, dies	First Saxon Wars	War with Lombardy	Charlemagne campaigns in Spain; events of The Song of Roland	Massacre at Verden (4,500 Saxons killed)	Charlemagne campaigns in Italy; annexes Bavaria	Avar Wars	Second Saxon Wars	Charlemagne crowned emperor	Charlemagne dies



# EDWARD I'S WARS

Reckoned one of England's most successful monarchs, Edward I (who ruled from 1272 to 1307) is noted for his role in strengthening the crown (to the detriment of the nobility) and instituting bold domestic policies. Yet even today, Wales and Scotland have little love for "Longshanks," as he was called for his height. By all accounts a ruthless, autocratic, tricky, and vengeful noblemen, Edward grew up fighting, taking part in the Barons' War, a bloody civil conflict, and leading his men on a crusade in 1270.



## EDWARD'S IRON GRIP

By the time Edward ascended to the throne in 1272, the already shaky relationship between England and Wales had seriously deteriorated. Prince Llywelyn, the most powerful Welsh lord, was betrothed to the daughter of Simon de Montfort, the opposition leader in the Barons' War. Llywelyn feared his Welsh enemies' collusion with England, with good reason, believing that England had already reneged on parts of the Treaty of Montgomery, signed in 1267. Armed conflicts began in the March, a sort of buffer zone, in 1270, Llywelyn refusing to travel to England to swear fealty to the new king.

Mustering an invasion force of some fifteen thousand infantry and just under a thousand cavalry, Edward declared war on November 12, 1276. Many Welsh lords, hopeful of better prospects under Edward than they had enjoyed with Llywelyn, defected in the brief campaign that followed, while the army hemmed Llywelyn into the mountainous, forested Snowdonia, his main territory. By November of 1277, Llywelyn's position had collapsed, and he was forced to accede to the humiliating Treaty of Aberconwy.

The Welsh mood had turned ugly by 1282, however, largely as a result of Edward's overbearing, autocratic ways. Two former English allies, Dafydd ap Gruffydd and Gruffydd ap Maredudd, raised a rebellion on March 22, taking castles at Hawarden, Carreg Cennen, and Llandovery within a week. Llywelyn quickly joined his former enemies, attacking Flint and Rhuddlan. Edward responded just as quickly, marching from Chester to Flint, Rhuddlan, and Hope Castle. Victories at Ruthin, Denbigh, and Dinas Bran forced the Welsh into the mountains, but the Welsh victory at Moel-y-don, on November 6, 1282, stiffened their resistance. But the next month Llywelyn

died assaulting Builth castle, and the last major Welsh fortress fell on April 25, 1283. With Dafydd's death that October, the conquest of Wales was complete. Subsequently, Edward, in a further attempt to subjugate the hostile population, built or repaired some eighteen castles, known as the "Iron Ring."

## THE SCOTTISH WARS

Edward I made also himself unpopular in Scotland by placing John Balliol on the Scottish throne. In 1295, the Scottish nobles provocatively allied with England's archenemy, France, an arrangement—known as the Auld Alliance—that lasted until 1746. Edward's subsequent invasion, in 1296, was quite successful. In short order, he took Berwick, Dunbar, and Stirling, marching all the way to Elgin, believing, incorrectly, that Scotland had been subdued. Instead, widespread rebellion, fomented by Robert the Bruce and William Wallace, broke out in 1297. After a major Scottish victory at Stirling Bridge, on November 11, the Scots raided Northumberland, besieging Roxburgh and Berwick.

Edward marched north with about 3,000 cavalry and 25,000 infantry, winning a major engagement at Falkirk in July 1298, easily taking Fife, Perth, Ayr, Lochmaben Castle, and Carlisle, but losing Stirling in an ill-considered winter operation. There was little to show for three more years of campaigning in the face of guerilla warfare, until Wallace was caught and executed in 1305. Robert the Bruce rebelled again in 1306, emerging victorious at the Battle of Loudon Hill in May 1307. Edward marched north once more, but he died, on July 7, 1307, at Burgh-by-Sands, and at the decisive Battle of Bannockburn, in June 1314, his successor lost Scotland to Robert the Bruce.

*Robert the Bruce and Henry de Bohun meet at the Battle of Bannockburn. This battle represented a significant victory for Scotland in its war of independence against England, and a humiliating defeat for King Edward I.*

*Below left: Map of England, Scotland, and Wales. During his tumultuous reign, Edward I clashed with both the Scots and the Welsh.*

*Below: Caernarfon Castle. After his hard-fought conquest of Wales, Edward I began replacing an older motte-and-bailey structure with a castle at Caernarfon Castle in 1283, turning the town and castle into the administrative center of northern Wales.*





# HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

The long conflict between England and France, somewhat inaccurately called the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453), in many ways represents the culmination of medieval European warfare. At the beginning France expected, with some reason, to dominate the field with her heavily armored, mounted knights, the chivalric flower of European nobility, but by the end gunpowder and cannons determined the fate of nations. At its heart, the war focused on ownership of Guyenne (part of Aquitaine), Flanders, and the French throne. Edward III of England (1327–1377) inherited the duchy of Aquitaine, and, as such, owed fealty to the French king, but through his mother claimed to be the rightful heir to the French throne. France, however, bestowed the kingship on a distant cousin, Philip VI. In 1337, wary of Edward's power in France, Philip VI seized Aquitaine; in response, Edward invaded Flanders.



Above: *Edward III of England.*



Above: *Foot soldiers and cavalry engage at the Siege of Calais in 1347.*

### FIRST PHASE

During the first phase of the war, lasting from 1337 to 1360, Edward III, his son, Edward the Black Prince, and other English leaders made major advances. An early naval victory at Sluys in 1340 ensured fighting would occur in France's territory; other significant English victories in these decades include Crécy, in 1346, the siege of Calais, in 1347, and Poitiers, in which King John II of France was captured, in 1356. France paid England a large ransom for John's return, as well as a newly enlarged Guyenne, in the Peace of Brétigny, signed in 1360.

### SECOND PHASE

Charles V of France (1364–1380) had no intention of abiding by this humiliating treaty, and, in 1369, he seized Aquitaine from the Black Prince, Aquitaine's terrifically unpopular governor. During the next phase, France recovered her lost territories, but most of the warfare after 1380 concerned internal rebellions and small civil wars, most importantly, the mounting strife between Orléans—whose supporters, the Armagnacs, declared for the dauphin—and Burgundy, led by the powerful dukes Philip the Bold (died in 1404), John the Fearless (assassinated in 1419), and Philip the Good (1419–1467).

### THIRD PHASE

The long international peace that began in 1380, broken only by an abortive English assault on the Flemish

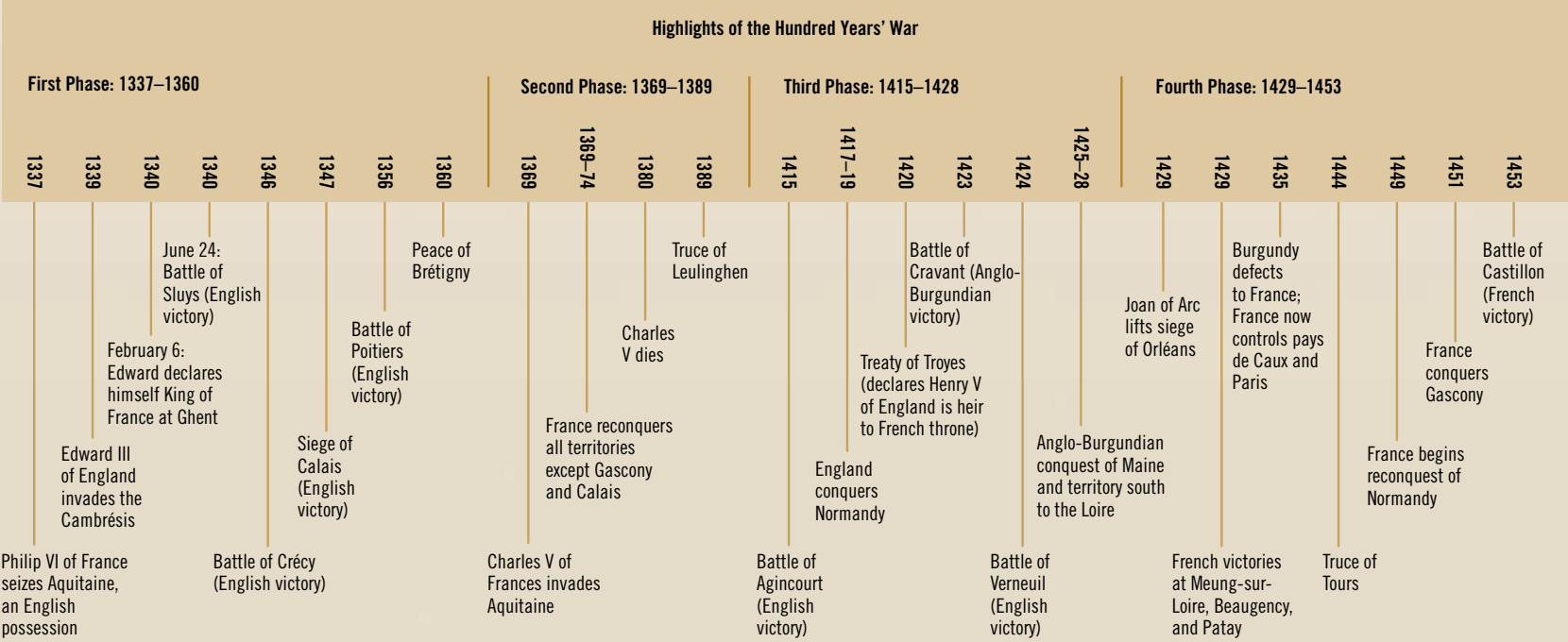


Above: *Joan of Arc, shown in full armor, fighting during the Battle of Orléans.*

coast in 1383, ended with the ascension of Henry V to the English throne in 1414. Laying claim to the French crown, Henry invaded in 1415 with thirty thousand men. By now, the Dauphin, Louis of Guienne, was dominated by the Armagnacs, a virtual prisoner in Rouen. Henry allied himself with Burgundy, won a smashing victory at Agincourt, and conquered Normandy. By 1422, when Henry V died, England and Burgundy controlled half of France.

### FOURTH PHASE

In 1428, England besieged the city of Orléans itself. It was at this point that the war took its most dramatic turn, when a French peasant girl known as Jeanne d'Arc (the famous "Joan of Arc"), convincing the demoralized French army that she had been sent by God, successfully lifted the Orléans siege and conquered Compiègne before her capture and execution. After 1429, with French victories in the Loire valley, the war did not so much end as dwindle away. Burgundy, dropping England, united with France in 1435. Embroiled in the Wars of the Roses, England barely noticed as France captured Paris, Normandy, Gascony, and Castillon. England kept Calais until 1558, but essentially the war ended with Joan's execution, her martyrdom uniting France even as England's attentions were drawn to internal affairs.





# BATTLES OF CRECY

After the Battle of Agincourt, fought in 1415 between Henry V of England and a French nobleman, Charles I d'Albert, the French never again engaged the victorious Englishman in open battle, allowing Henry to conquer Normandy and recognizing him as heir to the French throne in the Treaty of Troyes (1420). Henry's October 25 victory, celebrated so memorably by William Shakespeare, is, perhaps, more remarkable for the fact that this was the third time in the long course of the war that outnumbered Englishmen used essentially the same tactics to defeat heavily armored French cavalry.

## EDWARD'S ARCHERS

In 1346, within the first decade of the Hundred Years' War, Edward III of England encountered Philip VI at Crécy-en-Ponthieu. Philip brought some 12,000 knights, several thousand Italian crossbowmen, and perhaps 20,000 infantry. Arrayed against them were Edward's 4,000 knights, 5,000 infantry, and 7,000 Welsh longbowmen, who would play the decisive role in all three English victories. Edward's grandfather, Edward I, had learned the value of the longbow during his Welsh wars (see page 79).

Edward III placed the infantry at the center of his line, with cavalry and archers on both flanks angled toward the attackers. Philip's crossbows, sent in first, were routed, fleeing into the face of the first of many French cavalry charges. Philip meant to break the English infantry, but they held firm as archers shot down the French cavalry. In the end, fifteen hundred French knights and two kings lay dead on the field. Philip himself was wounded; Edward's forces escaped relatively unscathed.

## RAVAGES OF THE BLACK PRINCE

The title of Nicholas Roerich nineteenth-century depiction of Vikings heading toward a green shoreline, *Guests from Overseas*, is appropriate—although they came as raiders to Ireland in the eighth century, by the end of the Viking Age, the unwelcome guests had made it their home.

Henry V's tactic of besieging fortifications differed from most fourteenth-century English leaders, who favored raids, or *chevachées*, to demoralize the French and disrupt their economies. The best of the English raiders was Edward III's eldest son, Edward of Woodstock ("the Black Prince"), who, marching his men in parallel columns, inflicted maximum damage wherever he went. Then, on September 19, 1356, Edward and his 6,000 were caught by 15,000 French at Poitiers. Assuming a defensive position—and again with crucial aid from his archers—Edward killed 2,500 and captured the French king, paving the way for the Peace of Brétigny (1360), heavily weighted in England's favor.

## WE BAND OF BROTHERS

In 1415, Henry lost more than half his 30,000 men to disease before encountering the French army at Agincourt. In Shakespeare's famous Saint Crispin Day's speech in *Henry V*, the king dramatically waves away Westmorland's wish for more English soldiers: "The fewer men, the greater share of honor." We will never know what Henry actually thought, but he arrayed his archers as his predecessors had and, despite the disparity in numbers, one French charge after another resulted only in brutal rounds of French casualties. While estimates vary, the French dead, with 20,000 to 30,000, may have outnumbered the English by as many as 5 to 1.



Left: *The Battle of Crécy* looked like a guaranteed loss for the vastly outnumbered English, yet the employment of new tactics and weaponry turned defeat into victory. Armored French knights found themselves falling under an onslaught of arrows launched from English longbows, proving the importance of effective firepower.



# THE EUROPEAN CASTLE

The castle: perhaps no other icon encapsulates so much of the European medieval world. Serving equally as administrative capital, military garrison, and home, the basic idea of fortifying a defensible location was hardly new. Ring forts, such as Dún Aonghasa in Ireland, were built thousands of years before Norman engineers erected the first motte-and-bailey castle. Nor are castles unique to Europe; Japan famously developed its own, very similar feudal system complete with castles. European castles retained their significance for more than half a millennium, however, during which time they expanded, adopted improved defensive and architectural principles, and responded to the changing political, technological, and cultural landscapes that produced them.



*A trebuchet, derived from the ancient sling, is capable of launching heavy projectiles hundreds of feet.*

*Some of the floors and walls in Eltz Castle, near Trier, Germany, were made with a plaster consisting of ox blood, animal hair, clay, quick lime, and camphor. Three families reside there today, including descendants of the clan who originally lived there in the twelfth century.*



*Described as “the key to England,” because of its unique place in the country’s history, the twelfth-century Dover Castle, located in Kent, is also England’s largest.*





## A BETTER MOUSETRAP

Unlike earlier (and later) fortifications, which functioned simply as military installations, castles were the literal and symbolic heart of every fiefdom, duchy, and nation in Europe. Local lords, noblemen, and kings all had to have at least one castle. The more powerful figures, of course, controlled many. And as siege warfare, unsurprisingly, came to dominate the Middle Ages—and as the capacity of siege weapons to destroy castles increased dramatically—castles were, in turn, built to withstand them more effectively, an arms race ended only in the fifteenth century with the advent of gunpowder artillery.

Trebuchets, associated especially with the Crusaders in the Middle East, could launch multi-ton stones more than 700 feet, but these and other heavy siege weapons had to be built on-site. More typical was the onager, a much smaller engine still capable, even at the start of the Middle Ages, of tossing eight-pound weights 500 yards. In response, castle builders added innovations like stone curtain walls—gradually thickened to twenty feet—murder holes, moats, and curved towers. From their central stone keeps, or donjons, lords executed laws, passed judgments, entertained visitors, and, of course, assembled their armies.

Lords and kings would send out their forces in response to royal musters, banditry, a neighbor's unwarranted incursions, or to make such incursions themselves. Building castles meant controlling the surrounding territory, explaining why conquerors aimed directly for these stone targets, destroying the most troublesome and building their own to demonstrate their power. Militarily defensive, in many places castles also functioned offensively—psychologically over a fractious populace, or socially if built near a threatening neighbor, for example.

Hundreds of castles still dot the European landscape, including Harlech Castle, one of King Edward I's "Iron Ring" castles used to subdue Wales (see page 79), Château de Loches in France, Dover Castle in England (used for military operations as late as World War II), Burg Eltz in Germany, Malbork Castle in Poland, and Alcázar of Segovia in Spain, which has served as a royal residence, a prison, and a military school, and which today, like many of Europe's great castles, welcomes visitors from all over the world.

*Originally an Arab fort, the Alcázar of Segovia, or Segovia Castle, was a favorite residence of Castilian monarchs during the Middle Ages, and, in 1474, played a role in the rise to power of Queen Isabella I, who took refuge there.*





# WARS OF THE ROSES

From 1453 to 1485 a bloody tangle between the houses of Lancaster and York, two dynasties seeking the throne of England, ensnared the entire nobility of England, producing one of the most confusing arrays of alliances and betrayals, recoveries and collapses, in British military history. While France and Scotland, profiting from England’s disarray, recovered lands they had previously lost, in the end, the rise of the Tudors, whose founder, Henry VII, united the two lines, ushered in a golden English age.



Above: *An embroidered bookbinding from 16th-century England*

Below: *Edward IV’s forces drag the Lancastrians from Tewkesbury Abbey in “Sanctuary,” by Burchett.*



The Battle of Tewkesbury, a decisive battle of the war, is illustrated in the Ghent Manuscript.

## THE WARS OF THE ROSES: FIRST PHASE

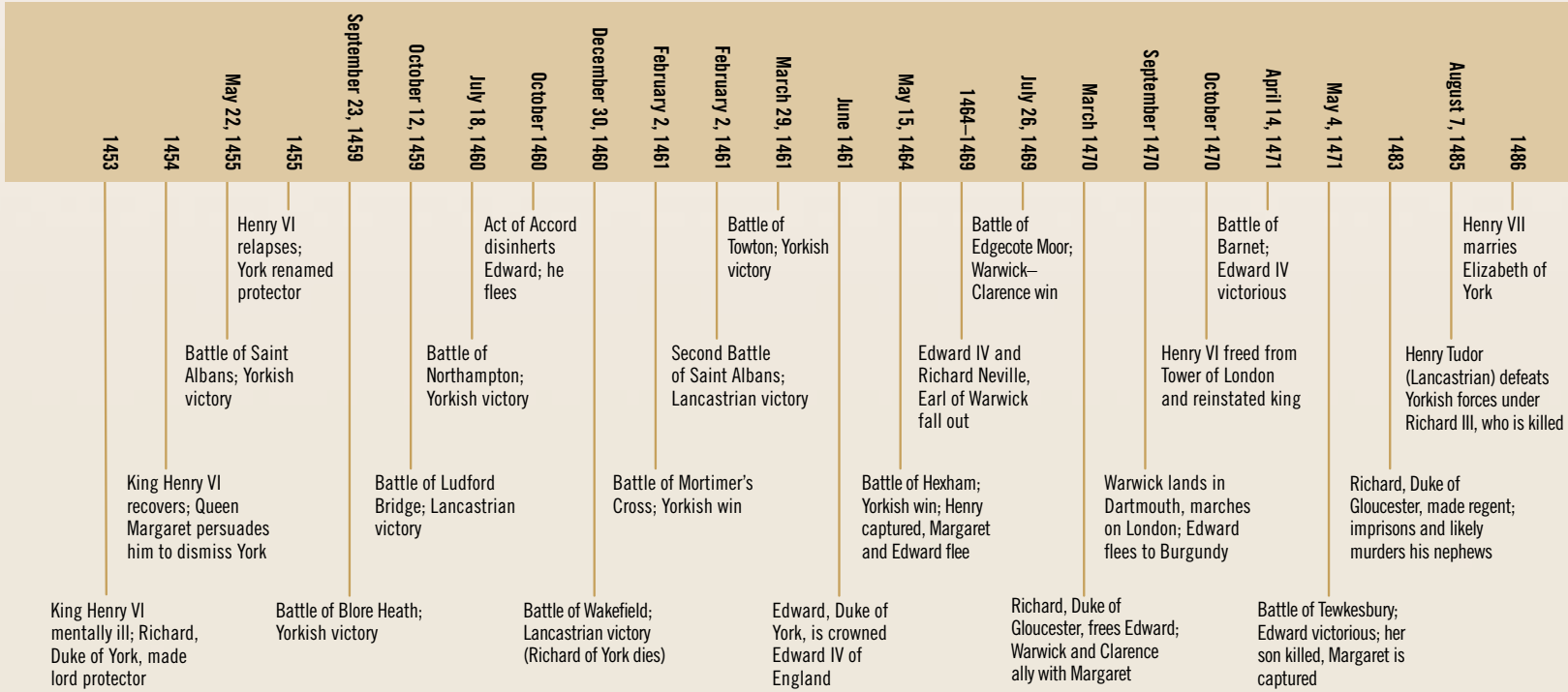
The war can be divided into three main phases. In the first, the insanity of King Henry VI (of Lancaster) allowed the popular Richard, Duke of York, to step in as lord protector. When Henry recovered his wits in 1454 and sent Richard out of London, however, Richard raised an army. His Yorkists won victory at the war’s first battle, at Saint Albans, on May 22, 1455; soon after, as Henry relapsed into insanity, Richard resumed the lord protector role. Four years of peace ended at the Battle of Blore Heath, on September 23, 1459, after Henry’s wife, Margaret of Anjou, tried to remove the Yorkists and Richard allied with the powerful and popular Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick. A decisive Yorkish victory at Northampton, in July 1460, resulted in the Act of Accord, which named Richard of York heir to the throne—thereby disinheriting Edward, son of Henry and Margaret. Bloody battles raged between Margaret’s

Lancastrians and the Yorkists, and the royal family eventually fled to Scotland. Richard, however, had died at the Battle of Wakefield on December 30, 1460, so it was his son who claimed the throne as Edward IV.

## SECOND AND THIRD PHASES

The second phase of the war lasted from 1469 to 1471 and pitted Edward IV and his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, against his former ally, the Earl of Warwick, and another brother, George, Duke of Clarence. Warwick and Clarence also allied with an old enemy, Margaret of Anjou. Significant victories on both sides tossed the throne first to one side, then the other; but eventually Edward IV stood victorious at the final Battle of Tewkesbury, in which Margaret was captured and her son killed. By now George had defected to Edward, so that all three York brothers stood united against Warwick.

The third and final phase of the war opened in 1483, when Edward IV died. His brother Richard imprisoned Edward’s sons, aged 12 and 9, in the Tower of London, presumably murdering them. As Richard III, he made himself desperately unpopular with his subjects, so that, when Lancastrian Henry Tudor returned from France to Milford Haven in Wales, he began attracting supporters immediately. Nevertheless, at the final battle at Bosworth Field, Henry had at most only 5,000 matched against Richard’s 10,000. In a dramatic battle, in which one of Richard’s nobles defected and the two contenders may have crossed blades personally, Richard died; the throne passed to Henry. Crowned Henry VII, the Lancastrian king married Elizabeth of York in 1486, uniting the two lines in a new Tudor dynasty that would hold England’s throne until 1603, guiding the country into the modern age.





# THE SPANISH ARMADA

In 1588 Philip II of Spain (1556–98) and Portugal (1580–98) launched a mighty armada to conquer England, ruled by Elizabeth I. Elizabeth, a Protestant, reversed the policy of her Catholic predecessor, Mary I, who had married Philip II in 1554. Mary earned the appellation “Bloody Mary,” for her violent attempts to stamp out the burgeoning Protestant movement in England; Elizabeth, less violently but no less firmly, encouraged Protestantism in her own country, as well as in Scotland and the Netherlands. English privateers who interrupted the flow of gold from the New World, like Sir Francis Drake, were already a problem for Philip, and when Elizabeth signed the Treaty of Nonsuch supporting Dutch rebels against Spain, in 1585, she threw down a gauntlet Philip could not afford to ignore.



Queen Mary I, as depicted by Dutch painter Anthonis Mor

## THE SPANISH ARMADA

The Spanish Armada set sail from Lisbon, Portugal, on May 28, 1588. In addition to transport vessels and light craft there were about 40 large warships, 28 of them newly built. Eight thousand sailors, 19,000 soldiers, and 2,000 cannon stopped first in A Coruña, Spain, to refit the ships, then sailed to Calais, where the armada waited for the second half of their invasion force, led by the Duke of Parma. But seeing a weakness, the English “Sea Dogs”—sailors led by none other than Sir Francis himself—quickly seized the opportunity.

The Spanish were vulnerable at Calais, unable to anchor in a safe port and incapable of continuing the invasion without Parma’s reinforcements. During the night of August 7, the English sent fire ships into the midst of the Spanish fleet. Forced to cut anchor or risk being incinerated, the Spaniards drifted helplessly away from Parma, their formation broken. Now it was up to the warships. Spain’s ships were heavier than England’s, and laden with soldiers; England’s, lighter, faster, and scantily crewed. In effect, the two countries were testing out different theories of naval warfare, and in the event, England’s proved sounder. The British ships nipped away at the heavier Spanish, outmaneuvering them and blasting them with cannon; the Spanish ships simply could not close fast enough to allow the infantry to board. Still, the English did not inflict much damage. At the Battle of Gravelines, on August 8, they sank only one Spanish ship, although a few more were driven ashore and several others badly damaged. With ammunition running low, the English disengaged.

## THE STORM THAT SAVED ENGLAND

Yet now nature—or God, in the opinion of many ecstatic Protestants—stepped in. A storm blew up, driving the Spanish ships away from the Flemish shore. With the winds against them



and the English fleet stoppering Parma in Flanders, the Armada was forced to sail north, coming around the tip of Scotland all the way around Ireland. Bad weather dogged them consistently; between the winds, the damage done at Gravelines, and food and water shortages, the Spanish Armada was battered beyond all recognition. It limped home to Spain with half its ships and about 12,000 men. With its passing, Spain’s naval star had set; for the next three hundred years, Britannia would rule the waves.

*The Spanish Armada was buffeted by heavy storms and forced to retreat, sailing back to Spain around Scotland and Ireland.*



*The Battle of Gravelines is shown in this painting by French-born English artist Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg. The more nimble British fleet bested the heavier Spanish ships, although it was “divine intervention,” in the form of a storm, that afforded the English a victory. Titled Defeat of the Spanish Armada, this painting hangs in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England.*



# OTTOMAN–HABSBURG WARS

Ever since the Ottoman victory at the Battle of Mohács in 1526 (see pages 192–193) and the Ottoman takeover of much of Hungary in 1541, the Habsburg dynasty recognized an “Ottoman Threat.” The Habsburgs, based in Austria, controlled huge portions of Europe, both east and west. The back-and-forth of these two mighty empires spawned several major conflicts over the following two-and-a-half centuries but did not finally resolve until the dissolution of both in the aftermath of World War I.



## THE OTTOMAN THREAT

Ottoman designs on European territories, particularly following border raids in the 1530s and 40s, prompted the Habsburgs to construct a 650-mile line of 120 fortifications through Croatia and the small area of Hungary remaining free of Ottoman rule. Much of the fighting for the next several centuries involved targeting these fortresses as well as their Ottoman twins. The first major conflict post-annexation began after an Ottoman raiding party was routed at Sissek in 1593, the same year that Moldavia, Wallachia, and Transylvania all revolted against the Ottomans. The combination prompted the Ottomans to declare war, but the massive scale of the Ottoman armies and the vast Ottoman territory meant armies were slow to muster and slow to advance, and 1593 ended anticlimactically. In 1594, however, Grand Vizier Sinan Pasha captured several border fortresses, only to fail the following year in a campaign against Bucharest and end back across the Danube.

Also in 1595, a resurgent Austria captured the crucial fortress of Gran (Esztergom), but lost another crucial fortress—Eğri—in 1596, suffering a massive field defeat in the process. Yanık fell in 1598, Kanisza in 1600, and Gran changed hands again in 1605, while Moldavia, Wallachia, and Transylvania reverted to Ottoman control. By then, however, although the Austrian empire was exhausted and distracted by other European wars, the Ottomans had to face internal revolts, war with Safavid Persia, and its own exhaustion, and left Austria’s capital Vienna—only 80 miles from Turkish fortresses in Hungary—for another day.

## TRIUMPH OF AUSTRIA

An unsteady peace reigned between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans for most of the rest of the seventeenth century, but territories continued to trade hands and Ottoman operations in the Mediterranean and along the Danube eventually led to the Great Turkish War (1683–99). The proximate cause was a rebellion in Austrian Hungary, whose leader recognized Ottoman sovereignty. Austrian efforts to quell the rebellion

Above left: *Suleiman the Magnificent led the Turks in an attack of Szigetvar castle in 1566.*

Above right: *An early version of the Habsburg coat of arms.*

Below: *The Sisak fortress, located in modern day Croatia, is the site of the Battle of Sisak where Ottoman forces suffered a crushing defeat.*



prompted an Ottoman invasion, leading to a siege of Vienna itself. Other European nations, putting aside their Protestant-Catholic disagreements, swarmed to aid Austria: the resulting coalition defeated the Ottomans at Gran, Neuhäusel, Buda (the capital of Ottoman Hungary), Mount Harsan, Belgrade, Nis, Slankamen, and Grosswardein by 1692. After about 1690, however, when the Ottomans took Belgrade, the Austrian-led forces fell back. Nevertheless, the concluding treaty of the war (Carlowitz, 1699), handed Transylvania and most of Hungary to Austria.

By now the technological advantages of an emerging industrialization in Europe were beginning to appear on the battlefield, while economic, social, and other woes afflicted the tottering Ottoman Empire. Despite a major victory at Banja Luka in 1737, after several eighteenth-century wars the Ottomans lost all of their European territories north of the Danube River as well as the northern coast of the Black Sea. By the early nineteenth century, the Ottoman Threat to Eastern Europe had ended.





# THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

One of the longest and deadliest conflicts in European history, the Thirty Years' War was the culmination of a century and a half of religious contention and the final bloody birth pangs of a modern Europe. It began innocuously enough, when Ferdinand II of Bohemia attempted to stamp out Protestantism in 1618. The consequences of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation meant that nationalistic and ethnic identities were now joined by—and usually superseded by—identification by Christian denomination: Roman Catholic, Lutheran, or Calvinist. Bohemia's Protestants therefore wasted no time in appealing to the powerful Protestant nations of Europe for aid, in response to which Ferdinand (Holy Roman Emperor from 1619) rallied the Catholic nations to his cause. For the next 30 years, unremitting warfare would tear Central Europe, especially the fractured polities of Germany.



## THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

An early victory over the Protestants at the Battle of White Mountain (1620) enabled Ferdinand to lock down control over not only Bohemia but also Austria, Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia; he went on to run roughshod over the Protestant regions of Germany and also Denmark, whose Protestant government supported the rebels and had hoped to seize control of certain northern Hapsburg territories. Sweden, one of the most powerful Protestant nations, now stepped in. King Gustavus Adolphus, who possessed a fine military mind, had modernized his army to a greater extent than any other European leader, even training new recruits himself in the use of muskets and becoming the first to field large numbers of field guns. His innovations paid off at the Battle of Breitenfeld in 1631, but shortly afterwards Poland, Sweden's primary Baltic Sea foe, seized its opportunity and attacked Russia; when Russia threw off its Polish yoke in 1634 Poland attacked Sweden. Meanwhile, the United Netherlands, a Protestant nation which had recently secured its independence from Catholic Spain, joined the fray, as did Spain itself. Although Catholic, France feared encirclement by the Hapsburgs, who controlled Spain as well as the Holy Roman Empire, and after a Spanish victory over Sweden at the Battle of Nördlingen in 1634, France threw its armies against the rising Hapsburg tide. All of these competing interests battled in Germany, whose hundreds of princes continued in their own bloody struggles. All of the

major European contenders relied heavily on mercenaries, so that—by example—the Swedish army of 60,000 which operated at the end of the war in Germany contained 42,000 foreign mercenaries. All of these mercenaries roamed willy-nilly throughout the hapless villages and countryside of Germany, burning, pillaging, and committing one atrocity after another, encouraged by the demonization of opposing religious denominations: some areas saw civilian population losses of 80 percent over the course of the war. One result of all of this confusion, with a multisided conflict and no moral order, was the profusion of small-scale skirmishes rather than organized battles and sieges. However, major Hapsburg defeats at the battles of Rocroi (1643) and Jankau (1645) neutered the Holy Roman Empire and the Hapsburg hegemony enough to bring about peace in 1648. The Peace of Westphalia redrew the map of Europe, recognizing the major political and geographical changes effected by the long war. France emerged as the dominant power of Western Europe while Sweden claimed the Baltic; the Holy Roman Empire, although it existed in theory, ceased to function with any kind of authority. At last, the religious fervor that had gripped and bloodied Europe faded—though dynastic squabbles and territorial ambitions would continue to inspire wars in the newly born Europe through the twentieth century.

## The Witchcraft Craze

Roughly coinciding with the wars of religion and the Thirty Years' War, the so-called "witchcraft craze" affected large portions of early modern Europe with a local intensity matching the national intensity of major wars. The peak period of witchcraft trials, from about 1560 to 1660, had dramatically variable incidents in different locales, but though total estimates vary widely, the Holy Roman Empire saw by far the most witchcraft accusations and executions, perhaps 27,000 to fewer than 5,000 in the rest of Europe, according to Northwestern University's William Monter. The factors producing witchcraft trials are multiple, complicated, and hotly debated, but it is certainly tempting to see a correlation between the trials and the fractured autonomous polities, social disruption, and religious contention characterizing the early modern Holy Roman Empire.



Above: *The Caroline Code, the basic code of law of the Holy Roman Empire in 1532 imposed heavy penalties on witchcraft.*  
Main image: *The siege and capture of Bautzen by Saxon troops. Repeated occupations and destruction led to disastrous city fires.*

Early Pre-Classical	Middle Pre-Classical	Late Pre-Classical	Early Classical	Late Classical	Terminal Classical	Early Post-Classical	Late Post-Classical
1200–1000 BC	1000–300 BC	300 BC–AD 250	AD 250–600	AD 600–900	AD 800–1000	AD 900–1200	AD 1200–1524



# RUSSIA–TURKEY

Between 1676 and 1812, the Ottoman and Russian empires warred no fewer than nine times, primarily over regions around the Black Sea, including the Sea of Azov, the Crimea, and the Balkans. The Ottoman Empire had peaked by 1683; thanks to the military achievements of Suleiman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566), the Ottomans controlled a large portion of Europe, stretching up the Danube nearly to Vienna and as far east as the Manych River. But in the seventeenth century, beginning with Peter the Great (r. 1682–1725), the Russian tsar, Russia began increasingly to assert its European interests.



*Peter the Great's first attack against the Ottomans in 1710 was disastrous.*



Top: *The Ottoman Empire grew under the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent.*

Above: *Catherine the Great led Russia to become one of the great powers of Europe.*

Below: *Outnumbered Russians were victorious in the the Battle of Akhazic.*



Above: *Map showing regions captured from Ottoman Empire by Austria, Russian, Great Britain and others.*

## CLASH OF THE TITANS

Over the next 150 years, Russia won, lost, and won again the important fortress of Azov, at the mouth of the Don River, and conquered Moldavia twice. Most of Russia's success came after 1768. In the three wars from 1768 until 1812, Russia extended her borders south and west, claiming the Crimea and Bessarabia. But the struggle between the two empires was not finished.

By the time of the 1768 war, nationalism had taken root throughout Europe. Russia put itself forward as the protector and leader of all Slavic peoples, a role she pursued into the

twentieth century. Thus, Catherine the Great of Russia (1762–96) elevated one of her dependents to the throne of Poland, filling the country with troops and provoking the Ottoman Empire into declaring war after an armed incident in Balta, a Crimean town. Russia's attempts at sheltering the Slavs were not always welcomed: Poland itself rebelled in 1863, and the Czechs pulled away shortly thereafter. Even so, the romance of Pan-Slavism was such that a Russian general led the Serbian and Montenegrin forces in a failed revolt against Turkey as late as 1875.

## ON THE SHORES OF THE BLACK SEA

Russia and the Ottomans went to war three more times in the nineteenth century, from 1828 to 1829, from 1853 to 1856 (the Crimean War; see page 89), and from 1877 to 1878. Ethnically defined nationalism precipitated all but the Crimean War. In 1821, a major rebellion in Greece began; as part of their attempt to put it down, the Ottomans anchored a fleet in the harbor at Navarino. In October of 1827, the Russians, supported by British and French allies, approached in a fleet of their own, apparently intending to negotiate peacefully. Yet fighting broke out, and the entire Ottoman fleet was destroyed. Declarations of war followed; Russia marched the following April, capturing by the end of the summer Adrianople (modern Edirne), within striking distance of Constantinople. The Ottomans were forced to concede Georgia, eastern Armenia, and Circassia, among other things. In the final war, from 1877 to 1878—their twelfth in two centuries—the Ottomans lost Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldavia, Walachia, and Romania. The centuries-old Ottoman Empire—its European possessions lost—its position weakened, would not survive much longer.





# CRIMEAN WAR

A brief conflict with few major strategic maneuvers and limited geopolitical results, the Crimean War nonetheless resonates in Eurasia's collective memory, thanks to incidents like the "Charge of the Light Brigade" and the horrors collectively visited on its soldiery. The war was also unusual for its inclusion of Great Britain and France, allied with the Ottomans, among the combatants, and as a transitional war pitting old technologies against new ones, with results that, in retrospect, seem sadly foreseeable.



## OLD ENEMIES, NEW ALLIANCES

A growing European power since the conclusion of the Great Northern War, Russia was unsatisfied with its Baltic accomplishments. In addition to its cold-water ports, in the Baltic and northern Pacific, it wanted a warm-water port on the Black Sea. Russia asserted its protection over Orthodox Christians living in the Ottoman Empire, the two additionally wrestling over the rights of Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches in Palestine. Russia felt it had the upper hand against the failing Ottoman state, having recently succeeded in suppressing a Hungarian uprising, and on July 2, 1853, Russian troops crossed the Pruth River, occupying the Danubian principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia). That fall, Turkey declared war.

Britain, perceiving Russia as a threat to its Middle East interests, and France, attempting to strengthen its alliance with Britain, joined forces with Turkey against Russia. Austria demanded that Russia evacuate its troops from the Danubian principalities; when Russia complied, Austria itself occupied them, although it refrained from joining the British-French-Ottoman alliance. Russia might have hoped that its Danubian maneuver would satisfy Britain and France as well, to no avail. By September of 1854, allied troops had landed on the Crimean Peninsula and allied ships prowled the Black Sea.

## FIRST BLOOD

The first major battle of the war took place at the Alma River, on September 20, 1854, as Anglo-French troops marched toward their primary target: the Russian fortress of Sevastopol. At the Alma the allies' technological advantage showed itself to full bloody advantage: thanks to a new type of rifle, the allies plowed through the Russian defenders, albeit with heavy casualties. At Sevastopol, however, the wooden warships—unable to withstand modern artillery—were obliged to withdraw, while excessive caution prevented the land troops from making an all-out assault.



Above: An early photograph by Roger Fenton during the time of the Battle of Balaclava showing a French and English camp consisting of British men of the 4th Dragoon Guards, two Zouave soldiers, and a nurse.



## WAR IN THE WINTER

The French rescued their British allies in the next major battle, at Inkerman on November 5, 1854. The Russians, launching a major assault, threw 35,000 men at a mere 15,700 allies, but the French commander, recognizing a Russian ploy to keep the allies divided, rushed to reinforce the beleaguered British. The disparity in numbers was offset, again, by superior allied weaponry; allied rifles accounted for the bulk of 12,000 Russian casualties, to 3,300 allied.

At this point, winter, the most famous and most brutal killer of the war, made its appearance. Overly confident British commanders had planned for a quick campaign, concluding before winter's onset. When heavily laden supply ships fell victim to a winter storm on November 14, shortages of food, clothing, and other supplies were inevitable. Among the British troops besieging Sevastopol that winter, mortality rates were over 50 percent—not including battle deaths.

## THE CRIMEAN CONCLUSION

Russia tried several times, beginning in February 1855, to break through allied lines to relieve the surrounding fortress, without success. The allies, while inflicting heavy casualties, were also unable to take it, although they did capture the Kerch Peninsula in May, allowing them to fill the Sea of Azov with allied ships, thus cutting off the Russian forces in the Crimea from Russia proper. In September, the fortress of Malakoff fell, and the Russians finally abandoned Sevastopol.

The Treaty of Paris concluded the war on March 30, 1856. Though the treaty preserved the Ottoman Empire, it could not prevent its precipitous decline, and the war itself provided only a temporary respite from Russian intervention in the Balkans, issues that would be left to other wars to resolve.

## THE LADY WITH THE LAMP

A lasting legacy of the Crimean War was improved military medicine and the standardization of nursing techniques. These were, in large part, the work of one remarkable woman, Florence Nightingale, who felt called to service and, over her snobbish family's objections, took 38 companions to a military hospital in Scutari, Istanbul. Her nightly walks through the wards earned her the sobriquet, "the Lady with the Lamp." An able administrator as well as a devoted, gifted nurse, she greatly improved conditions at the barracks, spearheading a small medical revolution.

## The Charge of the Light Brigade

By far the war's most famous episode, the exploits of Britain's Light Brigade at the Battle of Balaclava, on October 25, 1854, was immortalized by English poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson, the following year. Tennyson's poem speaks of the brave "six hundred"—in fact, 673 members of the light cavalry brigade charged into a death trap, thanks to a poorly worded message and an inept commander. With guns on both sides and their goal—artillery—in front, the brigade managed to reach the target, regroup, and charge again—a move that would have led to their complete destruction except for the timely intervention of a heroic French cavalry brigade. More than a third of the Light Brigade died in the foolish charge, along with nearly 500 horses; as Tennyson wrote, "Theirs not to reason why,/Theirs but to do and die./Into the Valley of Death/Rode the Six Hundred."

Above: French Marshal Bosquet said of the Charge of the Light Brigade, "It is magnificent, but it is not war. It is madness."

Top: Florence Nightingale first came to prominence during the Crimean War. Besides making lasting advances in medicinal practices, she also contributed to the field of statistics.



# GREAT NORTHERN WAR

Sweden emerged as a dominant European power in the seventeenth century. By 1700, Sweden reigned supreme in the Baltic Sea region, but Denmark-Norway, then a single country, resented the loss of Scania (Skåne) and chafed at Sweden's territories to its south—Bremen, Wismar, and Western Pomerania—territories that also upset the emerging Brandenburg-Prussia state. On the eastern shore of the Baltic, Swedish Finland, Karelia, Ingria, Estonia, and Livonia prevented Russia from reaching the sea; Russia's irritation matched that of Poland, which believed Livonia, by rights, belonged to it. Matters came to a head in 1697, when King Charles XI of Sweden died, leaving 14-year-old Charles XII to inherit. Denmark-Norway, Poland, and Russia, rapidly forming a coalition, attacked.



## THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR

At first this alliance made no headway. Although young, Charles XII was a capable, even brilliant, tactician who took a hands-on approach, confronting his enemies one by one. In February 1700, Augustus II of Poland and Saxony struck at Riga in Livonia; in March, Frederick IV of Denmark-Norway attacked Schleswig and Holstein; and in October, Peter the Great of Russia marched forty thousand soldiers to besiege Narva, a seaport on the Ingria-Estonia border.

In response, Charles XII attacked Denmark directly, landing an army near Copenhagen; Frederick had no choice but to withdraw from the war. Charles brought a mere eight thousand men against the Russians, but, displaying the full measure of his tactical genius, he delivered a humiliating defeat to Peter, who fled back to Russia. Holland, meanwhile, had successfully turned Augustus away from Riga, a major commercial city with significant Dutch interests. Charles went on the offensive, winning Courland, Lithuania, and most of Poland by 1703; after Charles invaded Saxony and captured Leipzig, in 1706, Augustus, capitulating, withdrew from the coalition.

## THE BALTIC BECKONS

By then, however, Peter had completely overhauled his army, enlarging and rearming it with modern weapons. Taking advantage of Charles's Polish distraction, Peter invaded again, in January 1702, and within a year had claimed most of the Neva River Valley. On May 1, 1703, he founded St. Petersburg, finally capturing Narva in August 1704. Courland had fallen by the onset of winter 1705, but that spring Russian troops withdrew from Poland.

Freed of Augustus, Charles turned his full attention to Russia, invading with some 20,000 men in January 1708. At the Wabis River, on July 4, he met 38,000 Russians and, remarkably, defeated them. As the Swedes pressed forward, the Russians slowly fell back, burning and destroying everything behind them, resulting in a severe food shortage for the Swedes. The Swedish army was roundly defeated in the decisive Battle of Poltava, on July 6, 1709. Charles appealed to Ottoman Turkey, which crushed a Russian army at the Battle of Pruth River in 1711, but he withdrew when Russia conceded the fortress of Azov.

Russia seemed unstoppable, winning victories at Tönning (1713) and Hangö (1714)—the first major Russian naval triumph—and menacing Stockholm itself. Denmark-Norway claimed Schleswig, Bremen, and Verden, while Karelia, Livonia, Estonia, and Ingria went to Russia. The war ended with Charles's death at the nearly successful siege of Frederikshald, on November 30, 1718. Sweden had lost its Baltic Sea empire, to Russia's gain. Russia (or its successor, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) has been dominant in the region ever since.



Above left: Map showing the Swedish Empire in 1661, when it controlled much of the Baltic region.

Left: The Battle of Poltava was won by the Russians under the leadership of Peter I. Sweden's defeat resulted in the beginning of the decline of the Swedish Empire.

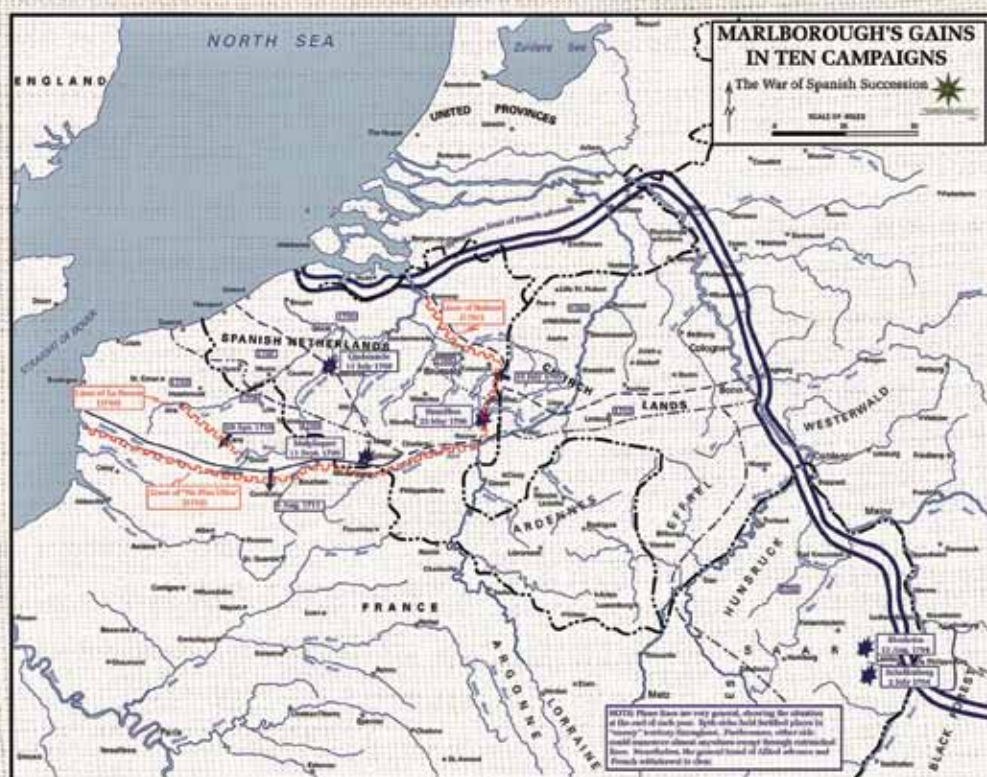


# WAR OF SPANISH SUCCESSION

Before King Carlos II of Spain (1665–1700) died childless on November 1, 1700, he named Philip of Anjou, the second son of the heir apparent to the throne of France, as his successor. One of several potential heirs, Philip had the advantage of being the grandson of Louis XIV of France (1643–1715), an extremely powerful monarch known as the Sun King. Philip became Philip V, the first Bourbon king of Spain, in 1700, riling various other European powers expecting to inherit parts of the Spanish empire, which by then included large sections of the Americas as well as Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, and parts of the Low Countries). When Louis XIV refused to disinherit Philip from the French line of succession, laying the foundation of a massive French-Spanish empire, England, Holland, and the Hapsburg dynasty of the Holy Roman Empire (Austria) formed a Grand Alliance against Philip V and France.



Above: King Louis XIV's ambitions for a unified French-Spanish Empire were ended with the Treaty of Utrecht.



Left: Originally rising from the rank of a lowly page, Marlborough commanded five great battles and captured over thirty enemy fortresses within the years 1702–1711.

## MARLBOROUGH'S WAR

France, with Spain at her side, made a formidable opponent, but England's Duke of Marlborough, one of Britain's most impressive warriors, led the allied forces. As long as Marlborough remained in the field, the French made no headway. In fact, they were driven out of the Low Countries one after another. At Blenheim, the most famous battle of the war, on August 13, 1704, Marlborough adeptly weakened the French center by attacking the left and right flanks, and then, with perfect timing, striking hard at the middle. The 56,000-strong French army collapsed, leaving 38,600 either dead, wounded, or captured. Marlborough's forces numbered some 52,000 and suffered 12,000 casualties. Marlborough also won important victories at Ramillies, in 1706, and Oudenarde, in 1708, while his fellow commander, Prince Eugène of Savoy, broke the French siege of Turin in 1706, halting a French advance from the south.

In Spain, Philip V held his own in a rough back-and-forth that focused on the cities of Valencia, Madrid, and Almanza, but in every other arena the Grand Alliance seemed invincible. Sardinia and Minorca fell in 1708; a hard-won victory at Malplaquet in 1709 allowed Marlborough to capture Mons. By the end of the 1711 campaign he had advanced to Bouchain.

## THE SUN KING SETS

Louis XIV, with ill winds blowing against him, had attempted to end the war in 1708, but England imposed impossible terms and France fought on. The following year, Louis found hope in a new commander, Marshal Claude-Louis-Hector de Villars. It was Villars who surrendered the field at Malplaquet, but he kept his army together and cost Marlborough so many men—perhaps 25,000—that in the end the victory proved pyrrhic.



Then, in 1711, Marlborough was recalled to England. Villars defeated Eugène at the decisive Battle of Denain, on July 24, 1712, subsequently following up with multiple victories in the Netherlands and on the Rhine River. By then, the Allies had fallen out with each other, and the treaties that ended the war—most notably, the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713—while leaving Philip V in control of Spain and Spanish America, divided the rest of Spanish Europe among the various factions. Austria took the Netherlands and Italy, while England claimed Gibraltar and Minorca. Louis, however, had to vow that no single monarch would ever rule both Spain and France.

Above: Following his victory at Blenheim, Marlborough wrote to his wife, "I have no time to say more but to beg you will give my duty to the Queen, and let her know her army has had a glorious victory."



# JACOBITE RISINGS

The Act of Union, passed in 1707, united the kingdoms of England and Scotland into Great Britain. It was a move that satisfied the ruling Hanovers of England and the Scots of the Lowlands, politically, socially, and increasingly economically dependent on London. In the Gaelic-speaking Highlands, however, union with England was anathema and fueled a surge of nationalism that merged with the preexisting Jacobite movement. Named after the Latin for the Stuart James II and VII, king of England and Scotland from 1685 until his exile in 1688 in favor of the Protestant Hanoverians, the Jacobites attracted support from English Roman Catholics, France, Ireland (largely Catholic), and Scots, more for political than religious reasons—although Scottish Episcopalians considered the deposed king the head of their church. In Scotland, the Jacobite movement of the eighteenth century produced two major uprisings, both with a tragic end.



Above: King James II was the last Roman Catholic monarch of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

## The Highland Way

Determined to end the Jacobite threat forever, the British government enacted a series of legal tactics to reduce the Highlands to docility. The tartans and bagpipes, symbols of an independent Scottish culture since 1707, were outlawed, the old clan system dismantled, and the clansmen disarmed. Worse, perhaps, was the attempted eradication of Scots Gaelic, a Celtic language that did not begin to witness a revival until the 1990s, and the much-discussed “Highland Clearances,” which encouraged, often forcibly, the removal of the rural Scottish population, sometimes as far away as Great Britain’s new overseas colonies in the Americas. Largely as a result of these actions, the ‘45 became greatly romanticized and still carries emotional force among those Scots who continue to espouse independence movements today.

## THE ‘15 AND THE ‘45

The 1715 uprising was a desultory affair led by John Erskine, Earl of Mar, a successful statesman but a poor military leader. The uprising ended quickly after the Battle of Sheriffmuir, in which the Hanoverian forces led by the Duke of Argyll successfully opposed an army twice their size. Support for the “lawful” king, James’s son James Edward (styled James III and VIII by Jacobites, “the Old Pretender” otherwise), dwindled: the Stuart cause languished in France for another thirty years.

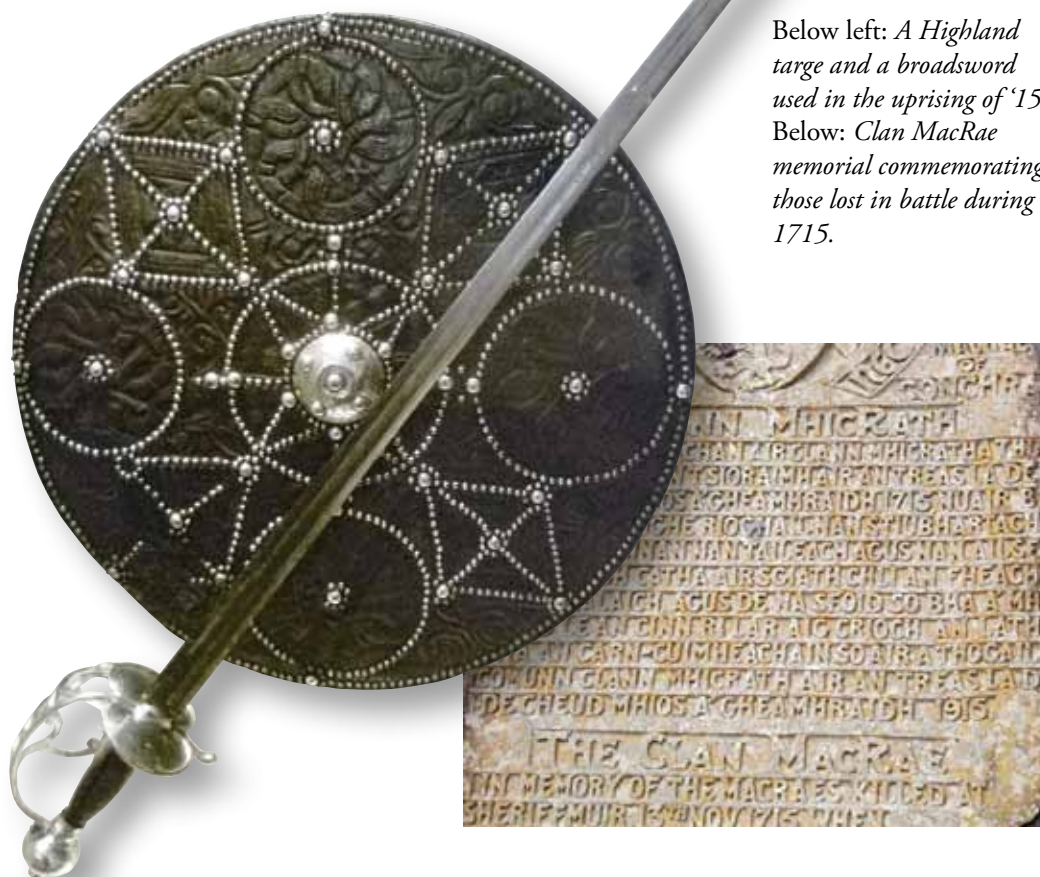
The main hope for the Jacobites lay with France, England’s oldest enemy and a Catholic supporter of the Stuart dynasty. In 1744, the nationalist hopes of Scotland were revived with a French invasion force. The French, however, were only secondarily interested in restoring a Catholic monarch to the English throne, being considerably more concerned with Austria and Central Europe. Support for Scotland, an economic and political backwater, came only as an afterthought. When bad weather disrupted the French invasion fleet, it simply turned around and went home.

The following year, a frustrated Prince Charles Edward Stuart, James II and VII’s grandson (“Bonnie Prince Charlie” to Highlanders), landed in Scotland anyway at the head of no force at all. Landing in the Hebrides on July 23, the prince had to rally native support, primarily from



Above: Prince Charles Edward Stuart led the ‘45 uprising, but was defeated in the Battle of Culloden.

Below left: A Highland targe and a broadsword used in the uprising of ‘15. Below: Clan MacRae memorial commemorating those lost in battle during 1715.



the Highland clans. Although England mustered troops to combat the uprising, few English troops were available (most were in continental Europe, angering France in the War of Austrian Succession) and those that were available were untested. As a result, Bonnie Prince Charlie led his Highlanders to victory at Perth (September 3), Edinburgh (September 17–18), and at the Battle of Prestonpans (September 20). Having crossed the English border, on November 15 the Scots captured Carlisle; by December 4 they had reached as far as Derby. Bonnie Prince Charlie intended to march all the way to London, 125 miles away, but by this time it was clear that the Jacobites could expect no local swellings of support from the Lowlands or in England, and they made a strategic retreat back into Scotland.

There they captured Stirling and won a resounding victory at the Battle of Falkirk on January 17, 1746, following up with the capture of Inverness in February and Fort Augustus in March. Despite this string of victories, however, the rising was about to come to a bloody end. The night of April 15, 1746, a nighttime assault on the English forces at Nairn left the Jacobites bruised and exhausted, yet—despite heartfelt pleas from his commanders—Prince Charlie insisted on standing the next day against the English troops at Culloden. The Highlanders charged, formerly a dreaded event that had won them several battles, but by now the English had adapted and mowed them down. In under an hour the lifeblood of the Highland Clans was vanishing into the earth, and although the prince escaped to France, never again would the Jacobites rise.



# FRENCH REVOLUTION

Thanks to drawn-out wars with Great Britain, by 1788 the government of France faced a financial crisis. That same year the countryside experienced a severe famine, further stressing the peasantry and those bourgeoisie who felt increasingly oppressed by the *ancien régime*—the archaic monarchical structure that still retained features of medieval feudalism. To raise taxes, King Louis XVI reluctantly called for an assembly of the Estates-General, not used since 1614, which included representatives from France's three "estates": the nobility, the clergy, and the Third Estate (i.e., everyone else). When the wealthy members of the first two estates tried to steamroll the proceedings, the Third Estate delegates—literally locked out of the proceedings—parked themselves in the king's tennis court, declared themselves to be the National Assembly, and swore to remain there until they had developed a new constitution. The French Revolution had begun.



Between 16,000 to 40,000 were killed by guillotine during the revolution.



## THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The situation at Versailles, the king's palace, fueled anger among the commoners; when the most important reformer was dismissed from the king's government, the storm broke. On July 14, 1789, a Parisian mob attacked the Bastille, a government prison whose significance as a symbol of tyranny was not diminished by the paltry number (seven) of prisoners inside. The fall of the Bastille is still celebrated in France today. The radicalism of the revolution and the demands of the National Assembly prompted the king to organize troops against it; but these proved unwilling to carry out his orders, and, faced with the imposition of a radical new regime, the king tried to flee in June 1791. His execution on January 21, 1793, marked the bloody end of the *ancien régime*.

## REVOLUTIONARIES AT WAR

On April 20, 1792, the new government—with Louis still trying to regain his hold on France—declared war on Austria. Rhetoric about liberty, self-determination, and equality inflamed the passions of France's revolutionaries, who wished to inspire similar revolutions beyond their own borders; the king hoped that foreign armies could do what he could not and crush the revolutionaries. At first it seemed he might get his wish: the French army, now composed of half-trained volunteers and suffering from a dearth of seasoned officers—many of whom had left when the king tried to leave in 1791—could not withstand the advance of the Austrians, now joined by their Prussian allies, who punched through French lines at Longwy and seized Verdun.

Finally, at Valmy on September 20, François Kellermann turned the point of an Austro-Prussian attack; although it was hardly a decisive victory, it drove French nationalism to new heights and marked the beginning of several months of victories, in which French armies poured into the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium), the Rhineland, Savoy, and Nice. In 1793, however, the Austrian Netherlands and the Rhineland were lost and counterrevolutions, driven by the extreme radicalism of a National Convention led by Robespierre, erupted in several major cities.



Above left: *The bedroom of Marie Antoinette at Versailles.*

Above: *Delacroix's Liberty Leading the People commemorates the July Revolution of 1830.*

Left: *Robespierre began as a lawyer and was an articulate speaker.*

Below: *French victory in the Battle of Fleurus, 1794.*



## The Reign of Terror and the Fall of the Republic

The Republican government adopted extreme measures, imprisoning hundreds of thousands and executing 17,000, often without trial, to crush the counterrevolutionaries; to continue the war, it decreed the *levée en masse* in August 1793, effectively mobilizing the entire country. Women, children, and even infirm old men, who could "preach the hatred of kings and the unity of the Republic," all had roles to play. This measure generated the largest European army to date: one million. It worked: the French won a resounding victory at Fleurus on June 26, 1794, securing the Netherlands for France, and marched again into the Rhineland and Italy. However, these victories counterintuitively discouraged faith in the extreme government, whose harsh measures now appeared extravagant, and the soldiers felt abandoned and mistreated. One man, Napoleon Bonaparte, would seize the opportunity, capitalizing on the demoralized army and the spent revolution.



# NAPOLEON

A brilliant young brigadier general named Napoleon Bonaparte began his rapid, remarkable rise to fame and glory in 1793. The bloody French Revolution had deposed the last king of the *ancien régime*, Louis XVI, and by 1796 the Revolutionary movement was faltering, the army growing disillusioned and disaffected. Assuming command of the dispirited Army of Italy, Napoleon roused the troops with a stirring speech on March 27, 1796, Napoleon, succeeding, in just under two months, in dividing the Piedmontese Italians from their Austrian allies, defeating each in turn. His tactical genius, often against superior numbers, would become a hallmark of his military career.



## NAPOLEON'S ADVENTURE IN EGYPT

Napoleon's boundless ambition was evident in his early decision to tackle the Ottoman Empire by attacking Egypt in 1798, his troops uncovering the Rosetta Stone, a discovery that, almost by itself, precipitated the field of Egyptology. Napoleon enjoyed success at Alexandria (July 1–3) and at the Battle of the Pyramids (July 21), but when an English shell exploded his flagship, *L'Orient*, at the Battle of the Nile, on August 2, his dream of replicating Alexander the Great's conquests exploded along with it. He subsequently proceeded overland as far as Acre, but, when the city withstood siege in 1799, Napoleon abandoned his army and sailed home.

Napoleon continued to enjoy the French army's support and, upon arrival in Paris, proceeded to orchestrate a coup d'état, which left him in control of France as First Consul. His attentions were immediately drawn again to northern Italy, where an opportunistic Austria had taken advantage of his absence to reestablish its control. Leading an army across the Alps, Napoleon defeated Austria for a second time with flair. Peace with England in 1802 left Napoleon without an enemy, but he devoted himself to redesigning his armed forces. His masterpiece, "la Grande Armée," was composed of many corps, new military units which incorporated infantry, cavalry, and artillery. This innovative unit, which might include anywhere from 10,000 to 30,000 men, could move rapidly, operate independently, or unite with other corps to form large armies. New conscription laws allowed Napoleon to field more than 2 million men at the height of his power, more than twice what the Revolutionary government had controlled in 1794. Napoleon inaugurated other reforms as well, including the tax and banking systems and a legal code that still provides the basis of French law today.



## A GAME OF CHESS

Napoleon, however, was a military commander first and foremost, and after declaring himself Emperor of France in 1804, he invaded Austria in 1805 (Austria, England, Russia, and, shortly afterward, Prussia, had just concluded an alliance against France). Napoleon crossed the Rhine with some 210,000 troops, won rapid and impressive victories at Ulm and Vienna and then, in one of the most important battles of his career, at Austerlitz on December 2. His tactics at Austerlitz, baiting an attack to weaken the center, smashing through the center line, and wheeling around in a pincer movement in order to destroy (not just defeat) the enemy army were not dissimilar to Marlborough's at the Battle of Blenheim a century before (see pages 272–73). Also like Marlborough, Napoleon displayed a genius not only for tactics but for strategy, always playing the board several moves ahead as though Europe were nothing more than a grand chess match.

Top: *Napoleon at the Tuileries Palace in Paris, 1812.*

Above: *Napoleon's decisive victory at Austerlitz began a ten-year period of French domination of Europe.*

Below left: *Map of central Europe illustrating the campaigns of Napoleon as of August, 1806.*



Above: *Spanish officials surrender Madrid to Napoleon following the Battle of Somosierra.*



# WATERLOO

The Holy Roman Empire finally gave up the ghost at Austerlitz, but Napoleon pressed on. At another remarkable battle, this time at Jena, he smashed the Prussian army and nearly eliminated it altogether; subsequent victories at Auerstätt and Lübeck threw Prussia out of the war. In 1808 Napoleon invaded Spain and pipped his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne, but the British commander Arthur Wellesley, Viscount of Wellington, conducted a brilliant defense of Portugal and in 1812 went on the offensive.



Caricature shows a single Russian peasant chopping off three French soldiers.

Left: Approximately 100,000 men from Napoleon's army died during the Russian campaign.

Right: The Duke of Wellington commanded a coalition of British, Dutch, and German forces to victory.

## NAPOLÉON'S WINTER

Napoleon was busy elsewhere, taking on Austria again in 1809 and then, in 1812, making the biggest strategic error of his career by invading Russia. As they had in the Great Northern War against the Swedes (see pages 270–271), the Russians fell back slowly, luring Napoleon all the way to Moscow and burning their lands as they passed. The Russians finally met Napoleon in battle at Borodino on September 7. Napoleon's victory there came at a bloody cost and when the Russian winter started settling in he had no choice but to retreat. The weather was an enemy even Napoleon could not outmaneuver, and his demoralized, bloodied, starving, and freezing army all but disintegrated.

## 100 DAYS TO WATERLOO

Heartened by the spectacle, Napoleon's enemies struck, recovering from losses at Lützen, Dresden, and Hanau to hand Napoleon a massive defeat at Leipzig in 1813. Napoleon was forced to relinquish his territories east of the Rhine. An invasion of France itself followed; with Paris taken in early 1814, Napoleon abdicated in April. Napoleon had no intention of remaining in exile on the Island of Elba, however, and with a small force from Corsica (the island of his birth) Napoleon landed in Cannes, France on March 1, 1815 to recover his lost throne.

For the next 100 days Europe scrambled to meet the renewed Napoleonic threat. By March 20 Napoleon had retaken Paris; French troops sent to oppose him defected. His enemies began to mass their armies, but Napoleon struck first, handing a defeat to the Prussian army at the Battle of Ligny on June 16, 1815. Then, at Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington commanded a large Allied army, refused to fall for Napoleon's now-famous feinting maneuvers, and smashed the French army. Napoleon was finished; he abdicated again four days after the battle, on June 20, 1815, and died in exile in 1821.

Right: The defeat at Waterloo ended Napoleon's military and political career. Almost fifty years of peace in Europe followed; the next major conflict was not until the Crimean War.





# KÖNIGGRÄTZ

Since well before the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire, northern Germany had contained many small principalities, duchies, princedoms, and kingdoms of varying autonomy and ambition. The once-mighty Hapsburgs, who had controlled the Holy Roman Empire for three centuries, survived in somewhat modified form as the rulers of Austria-Hungary, a united nation since 1867 and the most influential power in the region. Prussia, the next-largest regional power, was split in two by the Kingdom of Hanover and the Elect of Hesse and was largely dismissed by the European powers, its army derided as Europe's worst. But mid-nineteenth-century Prussia had two powerful advantages: rapid industrialization and Prince Otto von Bismarck.



## THE BATTLE OF KÖNIGGRÄTZ

In 1863 Frederick VII, king of Denmark, died with no male children. Seizing the opportunity, Prussia and Austria, backed by the rest of the German principalities, denied Denmark's right to Schleswig-Holstein and "reclaimed" the territory in 1864. Bismarck, who had famously proclaimed that the world's great questions would be settled by "iron and blood," nevertheless did not seek war when the German alliance crumbled; cannily, he sought to improve Prussia's position through diplomatic maneuvering. Austria, however, took a more militant stance and refused to negotiate with Prussia as an equal. As Austria slowly, ponderously drew up its armed forces, Prussia struck first—not at Austria, but at Hanover. The takeover was swift; no longer would Prussia be divided.

Bismarck's political genius was matched by the military genius of Helmuth Karl von Moltke, Prussia's chief of staff. Even as Hanover fell, Moltke rapidly assembled three armies on the Prussian-Austrian border, a feat made possible by Prussia's foresighted investment in railroads. One of the three armies took Saxony easily; 25,000 Saxons even joined the Prussian force. They then invaded Bohemia, taking Austria's commander, General

Ludwig August, Ritter von Benedek, by surprise. To his credit, the recently promoted von Benedek had tried to refuse his military appointment, admitting his lack of familiarity with both his troops and the terrain; his inexperience showed on the field, as he could not manage to secure good ground before the Battle of Königgrätz began on July 3, 1866.

In fact, neither the Prussians nor the Austrians held a tactical advantage in terms of terrain, but the Prussians were using a new kind of rifle, breech-loading needle guns. These guns had a vastly improved rate of fire over the older Austrian guns, and although Austrian artillery bested the Prussians', Austrian officers disregarded von Benedek's command to rely on it. Even so, at first Austrian complacency seemed well-placed; as morning turned into afternoon the Austrians began to celebrate a victory. Their right wing had been badly mauled by the needle guns, but they had not committed their cavalry and Prussia, apparently, had no more reserves. Then, the second Prussian army appeared. By the end of the day the Austrian army had been shattered: of 215,000 men, 60,000 were dead, wounded, or captured. The Prussians, starting with about the same number, had lost only 10,000.

Top: Bismarck was well-educated and cosmopolitan. He was fluent in English, French, Italian, and Russian, as well as German. His original goal was to become a diplomat.

Above: Map of Austria-Hungary in 1906. This dual monarchy existed for 51 years, ending in October of 1918.



# FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

The victory at Königgrätz propelled Prussia onto its inexorable rise to dominance. Austria accepted Prussia's terms of peace, which handed Prussia all of northern Germany and control of south Germany's military and foreign policies; but Prussian control in the south remained unstable and Bismarck sought a way to cement the German empire. Opportunity knocked on an unlikely door when the Spanish people deposed Queen Isabella II, leaving the throne vacant. Bismarck put a Prussian prince, Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, forward for the role. When Spain accepted, France panicked: once again, as it had been during the Habsburgs, France would be surrounded.

Simultaneously, the French emperor Napoleon III was losing prestige among the populace. Bismarck published a report of the diplomatic correspondence about the situation carefully crafted to inflame both German and French sensibilities; as he had intended, the south Germans felt insulted by France and fell in willingly with Prussia, while Napoleon III—believing France's armies still to be the best in Europe—took the bait, betting that a successful war would restore his popularity.



## THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

France did, in fact, have several advantages, in particular the chassepot rifle and the mitrailleuse, the first machine gun, and repeatedly gained the upper hand tactically. But the French were hamstrung by inefficient command structures, personality clashes, and poor generalship: on one occasion, 23,000 Frenchmen held off a Prussian assault of nearly 100,000 at Saint Privat, but this incredible achievement came to nothing when the commanders failed to send reinforcements or capitalize on it in any way. By contrast, the Prussian operation was a smooth-running, efficient juggernaut, with the brilliant and effective General Moltke still at its head.

The Prussians smashed through at Weissenburg on August 4, 1870, and followed up with victory at Wörth two days later, driving the right wing of the French army from Alsace. Meanwhile, the left wing confronted another Prussian army at Spicheren, near Saarbrücken. There the French guns inflicted nearly twice as many casualties as the French suffered, but Marshal Achille Bazaine (commander of the main French army) dithered about counterattacking, allowing Prussian reinforcements to arrive and, with ruthless efficiency, take the city, thus cutting the two French wings off from each other.

Within two-and-a-half weeks of declaring war, the Prussians had put both halves of the French army to the flight. Marshal Patrice Mac-Mahon, in command of the right wing, was retreating from Alsace to the west, while Bazaine engaged in a massive battle at Mars-la-Tour on August 16, which cost the contenders a combined 33,000 casualties and an even more massive battle at Gravelotte and Saint Privat two days later. Initial Prussian success faltered in the face of sturdy French

defenses at Saint Privat and crushing casualties; but once again the French command failed to capitalize on the situation and instead of pressing his advantage, Bazaine retreated overnight into the fortress at Metz.

## RISE OF THE FIRST REICH

Mac-Mahon, now alone on the field with the Prussians bottling up Bazaine at Metz, tried to relieve the siege, by now accompanied by the emperor himself—whose popularity in the light of the military catastrophes was plummeting, drowning in a growing rumble of revolutionary discontent. Mac-Mahon's choice of route was disastrous, allowing Moltke to surround and trap him easily at Sedan. Superior German artillery and almost twice as many men forced the emperor himself to surrender, thus precipitating the collapse of the Second French Empire.

Metz fell in October, by which time the French had formed the Third Republic and desperately tried to assemble a new army to meet the Prussians as they marched to Paris. They besieged the city on September 19, and although guerrilla bands tried to break the siege and disrupt the Prussian lines, the Prussians held on until the city surrendered on January 28, 1871.

The results of the brief war were far-reaching. Germany had formed the First Reich on January 18, 1871, and with its defeat of France assumed the dominant role on the European continent. Its prize of Alsace and Lorraine generated intense animosity, while the swiftness of its victory convinced Germany of its military supremacy and the world that future wars would be equally swift. Both assumptions would be tested with horrible results in the twentieth century.



Main image: *The Battle of Wörth was a decisive Prussian victory over Mac-Mahon in 1870.*

Top: *Napoleon III, elected President of the French Republic.*

Center: *Helmuth von Moltke, Prussian army chief-of-staff.*

Above: *Patrice de Mac-Mahon, French general and politician.*



# WORLD WAR I

The world's introduction to wholly “modern” warfare and a more truly global conflict than any that had come before it, World War I shook the world as no other war had ever done. Even the victors—the Entente powers of, to begin with, the United Kingdom, France, and Russia—did not escape unscathed. Russia lost its entire system of government in a terrible civil war that ended the empire and laid the foundations for a new one (see pages 292–93); the United Kingdom, although it had ostensibly fought to free “small nations,” watched its own overseas empire, itself composed of multiple small “nations,” fragment and rebel; and France, where the bulk of Europe's deadliest fighting in history took place, lay brutalized, traumatized in some ways beyond repair. Indeed, Europe as a whole lost its standing in the world. For centuries the home of the world's most powerful nations, the continent listed, to be replaced in geopolitics by emerging new powers like Japan, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

## Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

For the first time in history, airplanes appeared in the sky over battlefields during World War I. Only in 1903 had the airplane flown at all; although the first warplanes did make an appearance during the war, they were too small for use as transporters. Trains had been used to transport troops throughout the second half of the nineteenth century; they played an even larger role in World War I. The importance of railroads in ferrying troops and supplies became negatively obvious in Russia, which had not fully industrialized and whose economic system was in some ways archaic, nearly feudal. Russia's vast manpower meant little if it couldn't transport its troops to the front lines; as a result, Russia never participated in the game-changing way it might have. In the meantime, yet another means of transportation was making an appearance: at the First Battle of the Marne, 6,000 French troops were rushed to the front by Parisian taxis. It was the first time in history troops traveled by car.

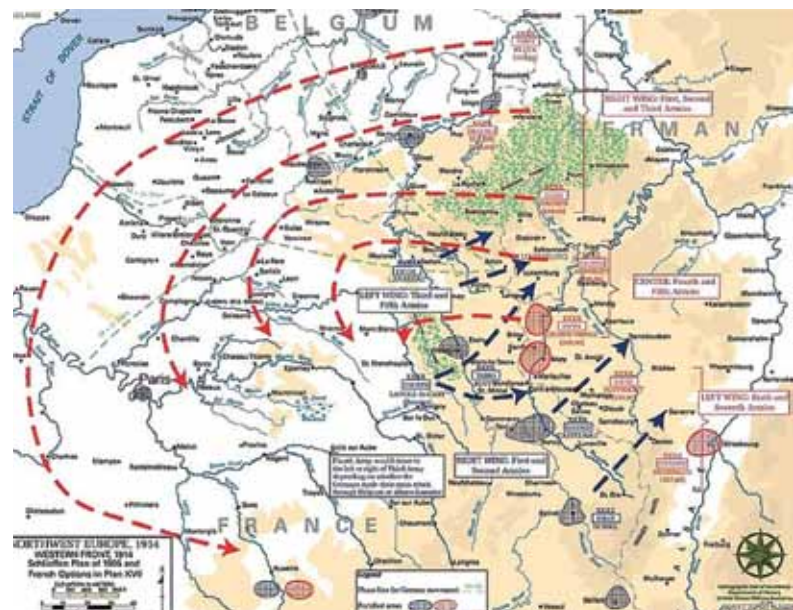
Top left: *This picture shows Gavrilo Princip's arrest, immediately after he shot and killed Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie.*  
 Top right: *The German Schlieffen Plan, created by Count Alfred von Schlieffen, was the General Staff's strategic plan for victory in any future war in which the German Empire might find itself fighting on two fronts: Russia to the East and France to the West. World War I was just such a war. The basis of the plan was to avoid a two-war front by concentrating troops in the West to quickly defeat the French and then speeding those troops by rail to the East to face the Russians before they could fully mobilize.*  
 Right: *French dugouts, 1915.*



## THE POWDER KEG EXPLODES

It was nationalism, the right of a given people to determine their own fate, that drove the war, and nationalism that began it in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian city of Sarajevo in the Balkans, the “powder keg of Europe.” Then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bosnia-Herzegovina contained a majority Serbian population, some of whom worked clandestinely to make Bosnia-Herzegovina part of the Kingdom of Serbia instead. One of these pan-Serbian nationalists shot and killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Austria-Hungary's heir apparent, on June 28, 1914, as he traveled on an official visit to the province.

The assassination might have remained a Balkan affair but for a tangled web of alliances and defensive pacts linking the European powers together. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia for its intransigence in the affair; Russia, in defense of Serbia, declared war on Austria-Hungary; Germany, allied to Austria-Hungary and wary of Russia's armies moving on its



borders, declared war on Russia and then, predicting that France would support its Russian ally, declared war on France and Belgium, a small country allied to the United Kingdom. By the end of August Europe bristled with armies.

## DIGGING INTO FRANCE

Germany planned to fight defensively on its eastern front while it rolled through France, following the Schlieffen Plan devised more than a decade earlier. Once its western front was secure, it would deal with Russia. Unexpectedly, however, Germany smashed Russian forces at the Battle of Tannenberg in late August 1914, while in the west, after steamrolling Belgium, the Germans bogged down. A minor Entente victory at the First Battle of the Marne forced the Germans to dig in, as did their foes: the first trenches of World War I had appeared.





# WORLD WAR I

The year 1915 was bad for both sides. In Africa, the South Pacific, and the Far East, German colonies and allies were overrun; but in Europe itself, Germany and its allies reigned triumphant. From February 19 until December 28 the Entente launched a major campaign on Gallipoli, a peninsula belonging to the Ottoman Empire. Whoever controlled Gallipoli controlled the Dardanelles straight, a step toward winning waterborne access to Russia's Black Sea ports. With Britain's superior navy, access to these could solve Russia's crushing logistical difficulties, allowing the 150-million person empire (by far the largest European country—in fact, the largest in the world) to bring its potential power to bear against the Central Powers.



Above: *The Allies suffered 623,907 casualties during the Battle of the Somme, German casualties are estimated to be between 4-500,000.*



## TO AUSTRALIA VIA GALLIPOLI

The Entente stars of the Gallipoli campaign were the ANZAC troops, Australian and New Zealander Army Corps. Their landing site on April 25, 1915, is now known as Anzac Cove. They made it onto the steep slopes above the beach before Turkish defenders opened fire from above. Showing remarkable tenacity, ANZAC troops refused to retreat and instead dug in. All over the peninsula trench warfare set in, as did a brutally hot summer, insects, and the attendant diseases. For months a costly stalemate held; finally, with 250,000 casualties, the Entente withdrew. The grueling adventure, however, forged a national spirit in Australians, who still make yearly pilgrimages to Anzac Cove on April 25.



Right: *The Battle of the Somme was one of the largest battles of World War I; the British and French armies supported by contingents from Australia, New Zealand, Newfoundland, Canada, India and South Africa, mounted a summer assault—"the Big Push"—against the German army. By the time fighting ended in November 1916, the forces involved had suffered more than 1 million casualties, making it one of the bloodiest military operations in history.*



## IN THE TRENCHES

The Entente had no better luck at the Second Battle of Ypres, notable for the use of poison gas, and still less in Serbia, which despite a heroic defense—more Serbians died in proportion to their prewar population than any other European nationality—was completely overrun by December. The Italians, who had joined the Entente, clashed with bloody inutility against the Austro-Hungarians for the first four of eleven Battles of the Isonzo. The Russians suffered defeat in Poland, losing the country to the Germans.

The darkest year of the war was perhaps 1916. A horrific battle of attrition at Verdun lasted from February 21 to December 18, leaving entire villages razed and forests so poisoned that some have never regrown. Verdun cost approximately one million casualties, although it is difficult to estimate civilian losses. The Battle of the Somme, from June 24 to November 18, cost another million, including 60,000 Brits in the bloodiest day in British military history; the Entente offensive against the entrenched Germans inched the allies forward only about 10 miles. By now, however, the Central Powers were flagging as well. A failed harvest in Germany in 1916 heralded the beginning of famine; Austria-Hungary, having revenged itself on Serbia and conquered Montenegro in January, began clamoring for peace. But Russia was also beginning to collapse under internal revolution, and in February 1917 German general chief of staff Paul von Hindenburg pulled the western front back to a line of reinforced defenses called the Hindenburg Line.

Top left: *The pre-dreadnought battleship, Bouvet, sinking after striking a mine in the Dardanelles in 1906: some 660 men died.* Left: *Anzac Cove is a small cove on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey, which became famous as the site of a World War landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) on 25 April 1915. The cove is only 2,000 ft long. Anzac Cove was always within ¾ of a mile of the front-line, well within the range of Turkish artillery. The beach itself became an enormous supply dump and the ANZACs established two field hospitals, one at either end.*



Above: *Paul von Hindenburg had retired from the Prussian Army in 1911, but was recalled shortly after the outbreak of World War I in 1914 by the Chief of the General Staff. Hindenburg was given command of the Eighth Army, which was in combat with the First and Second Russian armies in Prussia; Hindenburg's predecessor had been planning to retreat. Hindenburg's Eighth Army was victorious in the two major battles against the Russian, and these successes made him a national hero.*



# WORLD WAR I

Much of the horror of World War I stemmed from the use of new weapons and devices like machine guns, poison gas, barbed wire, and improved artillery, all of which prevented both sides on the western front from advancing, resulting in long, horrific battles of attrition. At Verdun, for example, a sudden German offensive took French defenders by surprise, allowing the Germans to advance along the Meuse River up to Fort Douaumont, which fell to the onslaught. Heavy bombardment broke French lines, leaving pockets of trench resistance, but the French, determined not to let the Germans advance farther, held on. The German commander had, in fact, hoped for such a situation: he intended to bleed France dry. Apparently he had not expected how dry the stalemate would bleed his own forces; eventually the Germans were forced back until, by the end of the nine-month battle, both sides were back where they started.



## STALEMATE

Throughout the war, Britain and France hoped for massive Russian armies to come to the rescue, but Russia's energies instead turned inward. After the Bolshevik Revolution (see pages 108 and 313) the new government signed a peace treaty with Germany in December 1917. Salvation came from another infant superpower: the United States. The first "doughboys" began arriving on July 3, 1917; the influx of fresh, confident soldiers probably did more toward winning the war by improving morale rather than by military accomplishments.

By then France was in dire straits, having spent 250,000 casualties on a 500-yard gain at Chemin des Dames in April. The celebrated Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge the same month—although it helped cement Canadian national identity, as Gallipoli did for Australia—had not resulted in an allied breakthrough. Even with arrival of the Americans, 1917 did not end well for the Entente; Russia's withdrawal immediately followed the Third Battle of Ypres (July 31–November 10), in which an optimistic British offensive stymied in heavy rains, turning the battlefield to mud. Minor Entente gains won no strategic victory, to the tune of a total of 700,000 casualties.

Main image above: *The Battle of Vimy Ridge was the first occasion when all four divisions of the Canadian Expeditionary Force fought in a battle together. It became a Canadian nationalistic symbol of sacrifice and achievement.*



Above left: *A young German soldier during World War I.*  
Above right: *Franz Ritter von Hipper (center) was an admiral in the German Imperial Navy. During the war, von Hipper led the German battlecruisers on raids of the English coast, for which he was vilified in the British press as a "baby killer."*

Left: *German bi-plane*

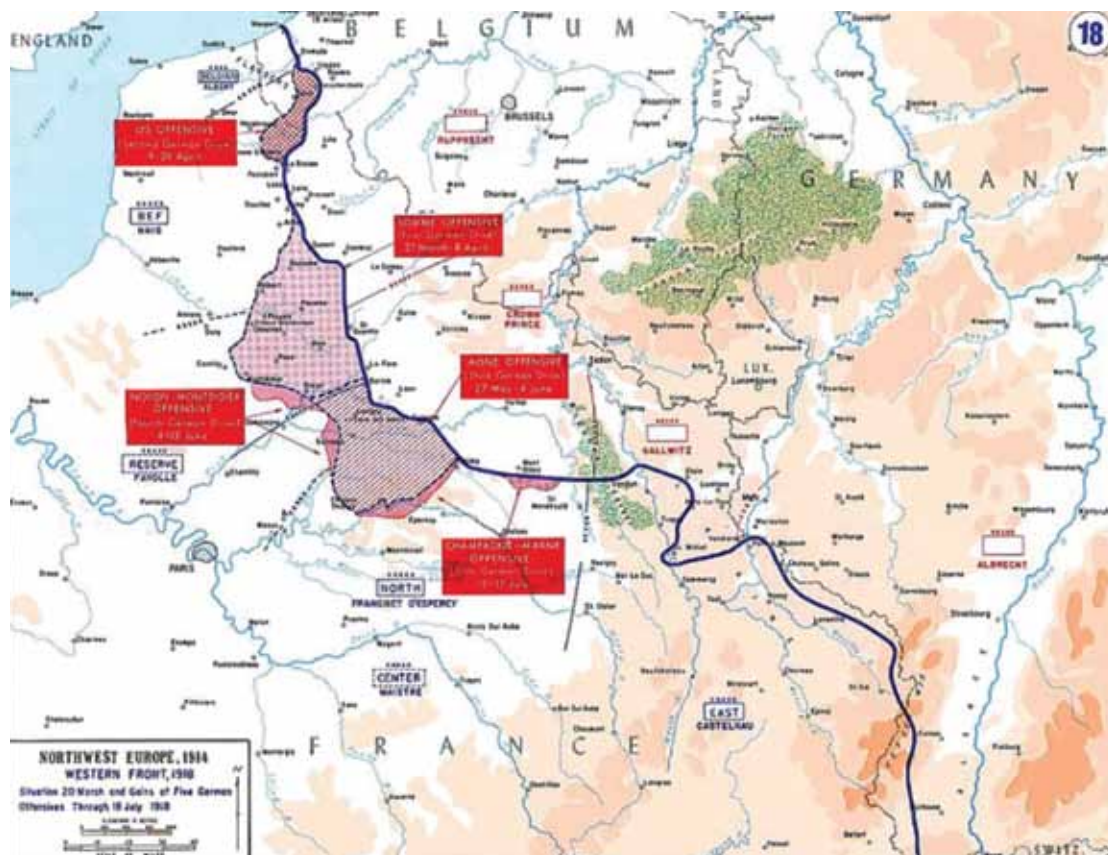


# WORLD WAR I

Germany knew that its time was limited once the United States entered the war, but hoped it could win victory before the Americans could put together an army and a navy (for, despite large resources, it possessed neither). Peace with Russia and a large victory over the Italians at Caporetto in October 1917 offered Germany one last chance.



*German Tank Corps in France.*



*Left: Map of the final German Offensives on the Western Front, in 1918, including the Somme Offensive, the Lys Offensive, The Noyon-Montdidier Offensive, the Champagne-Marne Offensive, and the Aisne Offensive.*

## Pandora's Box

The Treaty of Versailles forced heavy penalties on the defeated Germany; anger at the long, destructive war focused directly on the most powerful—and indeed the only remaining—member of the Central Powers. Germany, defeated, agreed to pay large sums to the Entente countries, reduce its military forces to nearly nothing, hand over several territories, and accept responsibility for the whole sorry affair. The ill-tempered treaty inflicted severe suffering on Germany and fostered resentment among a new generation, many of whom felt the terms were a disgrace; since no Entente army had ever set foot in Germany, they argued, Germany had, in fact, not suffered a military defeat, and the German people had been stabbed in the back by cowardly and weak politicians. Such arguments encouraged the formation of militant political groups like the Nazis. In addition, the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire left a slew of weak young nations driven by nationalistic fervor, while the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin began accumulating power through famine-inducing forced “collectivization” of agriculture and industry and, worse still, purges. In effect, World War I, although optimists hoped it would be the “war to end all wars,” had only laid the groundwork for future bloodshed.

## ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH

Marshaling all of its tired resources, Germany launched one last, full-scale assault on the western front beginning March 21, 1918. The first thrust of the Spring Offensive earned the Germans 40 miles of French soil; in April they drove the British back 12 miles in Flanders. On May 27 offensive action carried the German wave all the way to Château-Thierry, only 56 miles from Paris. The French and British forces seemed to have reached their physical and emotional breaking points. Even so, the Germans were exhausted as well. They won minimal ground in the last action of the Spring Offensive, the “Marne-Rheims” offensive, and, despite their impressive early victories, it had not been enough.

## THE ELEVENTH HOUR

At Marne desperate French resistance had halted the German advance, while in Belleau Wood the American Marines earned fame in preventing the capture of Rheims. Alone among the armies, the Americans were eager, optimistic, and healthy in both mind and body. They lacked experience, but brought many new tanks—a machine that could, finally, effectively combat men in trenches. (The British had first used tanks at the Battle of the Somme in 1916, but until the Americans arrived no European power could devote the necessary industry to producing these killing machines in enough numbers to make a difference.)

The Second Battle of the Marne, an American-French counterattack begun on July 18, 1918, was the first allied offensive action in the so-called Hundred Days, a series of attacks that pushed the Germans back and farther back, to Soissons in July, to Amiens, which fell to allied attack on August 8, and finally to the Hindenburg Line. On September 29, allied forces broke through. The following month, both the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires disintegrated, with the Ottomans surrendering to Britain on October 30 and Austria-Hungary simply exploding into multiple new nations.

The major Balkan ally of the Central Powers, Bulgaria, signed an armistice the same day that the Hindenburg Line failed; the rest of the Balkans quickly quieted down after that. Germany was on its own, and it simply had no more will. On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918, Germany signed the Armistice of Compiègne. The war officially ended June 28, 1919, with the Treaty of Versailles.

*Below: The Battle of Belleau occurred during the German Spring Offensive. The battle was fought between the U.S. Second and Third Divisions and an assortment of German units including elements from the 237th, 10th, 197th, 87th, and 28th Divisions. The battle has become a deep part of the lore of the United States Marine Corps.*





# DEATH FROM ABOVE

In the early twentieth century two American inventors, the Wright brothers, finally succeeded at what many had dreamed of but none had been able to accomplish: human flight. Airplanes breached a new frontier and offered militaries a new arena: the skies. The first airplanes used in war flew over Europe during World War I, initially to survey enemy positions and movement; within a few short years, however, the obvious advantage of aerial weaponry had spurred the development of the first warplanes, flown by the first air force pilots.

Right: American recruitment poster for the US Air Service: *Learn and Earn!*



## The Red Baron and His Flying Circus

The most famous World War I aviator was Manfred von Richthofen, called the Red Baron, thanks to his distinctively painted red airplane and his noble title, Freiherr. Von Richthofen commanded Germany's Jagdgeschwader 1, Fighter Wing 1, called "Richthofen's Flying Circus" for its colorful airplanes. As Germany's first flying "ace," von Richthofen downed eighty enemy aircraft, the most of any pilot in World War I. He died in action on April 21, 1918, at Vaux-sur-Somme in France, shot down by Captain Arthur Roy Brown of the Royal Air Force. His renown was such that when Entente forces recovered his body they buried him with full military honors, despite his enemy combatant status.



Left: *Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen, widely known as the Red Baron, was a German fighter pilot with the Luftstreitkräfte (Imperial German Army Air Service) during World War I. He is considered the top fighter pilot of that war, being officially credited with 80 air combat victories, more than any other pilot on either side.*



Above: *Richthofen's Albatros D.V*  
Below: *The remotely piloted General Atomics MQ-1 Predator can be used for reconnaissance or to fire missiles.*





## THE SOUND BARRIER

The first aviators would be hard pressed even to recognize the sleek, multimillion-dollar planes flown by today's modern air forces. Modern planes fly faster than the speed of sound (660 miles per hour at 40,000 feet above sea level); the fastest, an experimental plane called the North American X-15, reached Mach 6.7 (Mach numbers are used to measure velocities greater than the speed of sound). In addition to incredible speed, modern planes can also fly incredibly high, perform amazing maneuvers, and fly thousands of miles before they need to land for refueling. Reconnaissance planes, or "spy planes," such as the earliest World War I machines, have developed apace, coming into their heyday during the Cold War. During the Cold War, U-2 American spy planes, which could fly at an altitude of 70,000 feet, detected Soviets building missile launch pads in Cuba—information that may have averted nuclear war.



Unmanned satellites in orbit around Earth and other unmanned craft have played ever-more important roles over the decades. During the Afghanistan War (see pages 94–95), American presidents Bush and Obama authorized increasing numbers of drone strikes against military targets. Drones, which are unmanned tactical craft controlled by computers, can strike pinpointed locations, useful for hunting terrorists; advocates point to their ability to kill single combatants without undue auxiliary casualties, their lack of risk to American personnel, and their (relatively) low cost. Detractors, however, worry about drone errors—which certainly have occurred—and the negative press generated among civilian populations.

*Above: The X-15 was a North American rocket-powered aircraft operated by NASA and the US Air Force as part of the X plane series of experimental aircraft.*



*Main image: The McDonnell Douglas F/A 18 Hornet is a twin-engine supersonic fighter jet, designed to attack ground targets, and to dogfight.*



# RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Czar Nicholas II of Russia (1894–1917) and especially his wife, Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, became nigh-well hated by the populace for their autocratic principles, poor policies, and for World War I, which exposed the Russian military as an incompetent, old-fashioned, expensive fighting force that could not seem to win battles. Famine and antiwar sentiment mixed with political movements espousing various forms of non-autocratic government; scenting an opportunity, German foreign minister Arthur Zimmerman collected the exiled Bolshevik (the Russian socialist party) Vladimir Lenin from Switzerland and smuggled him and other exiles into Russia. Lenin arrived on April 3, 1917 (according to the Julian calendar, in use in Russia until 1918; the Gregorian calendar puts his arrival at April 16), two months after the “February Revolution” that overthrew Nicholas II and established a provisional government.



Vladimir Lenin in 1920



## Last of the Romanovs

The Romanov dynasty had ruled Russia since 1613; Czar Nicholas II was the last Romanov monarch. His abdication on March 2, 1917 (March 15 according to the Gregorian calendar) did not satisfy the Bolshevik revolutionaries, even when Nicholas's brother Michael also refused the throne. Nicholas and his family, including his beloved wife, Alexandra, his son, his daughters, and several family servants, were removed to Yekaterinburg. Their execution in the night of July 16–17 cast a dark shadow over the revolution and the fate of the duchess Anastasia generated mystery for decades, after several women claiming her identity stepped forward. The remains of Alexis, Nicholas's son, and Maria, one of the daughters, were not found until 2007, seven years after they, along with the rest of the family, had been canonized as Passion Bearers by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Above: Czar Nicholas II could not handle the sweeping industrial changes overtaking Russian society or the demands from Russian workers for civil rights.

Above right: A poster for the October Revolution of 1917.

Top right: Laborers demonstrated en masse on May 1, 1917 in Petrograd.



## THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The Russian Empire fell apart. The weak provisional government could not control its own members, let alone the subject peoples of Russia, and in addition tried futilely to continue the war. The Bolsheviks, spurred by Lenin and other leaders, undermined the government's authority, provoking riots, promoting dissatisfaction among factory workers and soldiers, and everywhere calling for socialist revolution. On October 24, 1917 (November 6 in the Gregorian calendar), Bolsheviks surrounded the Winter Palace, headquarters of the government, and orchestrated a coup. Over the next two days they seized all government offices, communication venues, and other strategic points in Petrograd (St. Petersburg); Lenin officially announced the victory of the revolution.

## RED TOPPLES WHITE

Germany had smuggled Lenin and funded the Bolshevik cause because Lenin vocally demanded an end to Russia's involvement in World War I; he delivered with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, signed March 3, 1918. The treaty heavily favored Germany, which won Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and part of the Ukraine. The new Bolshevik government could not continue warring with the West. It had too much on its hands keeping and expanding its power, with many “White” armies forming against the “Red” Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks had the most control over the western parts of Russia and the cities, while the most trouble came from the Don Cossacks in the south



and a 10,000-man Czech army that rebelled while in Siberia. Foreign White forces moved against the Bolsheviks as well, but each of these opposing forces had its own agenda and none of them coordinated with the other. As a result, the Bolsheviks—drawing ever-increasing numbers from the suffering poor of Russia—could counteract them one by one. Finally, when the last Whites were driven out of the Crimea in November 1920, all that remained were pockets of resistance, put down over the next few years. Russia was no more. In its place rose the United Soviet Socialist Republic, or the Soviet Union.



Above: The Bolsheviks secured supremacy over other political groups and Lenin made peace with Germany to end a costly and draining war. He underestimated the furious international backlash that was to follow.



# IRISH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Among the “small nations” clamoring for freedom in the early twentieth century was Ireland (passed in 1801, the Act of Union created the United Kingdom out of Ireland and Great Britain, i.e., England and Scotland.) Although in theory the United Kingdom supported the cause of self-determination for oppressed peoples, it had no intention of giving up Ireland. World War I only heightened tensions, as the UK conscripted young Irish men (as well as English, Welsh, and Scottish) to fight the Central Powers; but the end of World War I did not bring about reconciliation. In 1918 a political party standing for an independent, republican Ireland—Sinn Féin—rose to power, supported by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a militant group dedicated to independence.

## WHERE THE FENIANS SLEEP [OR: TO DIE 'NEATH AN IRISH SKY]

During World War I, the Irish Volunteers—a predecessor to the IRA—staged a nationwide uprising during Easter, beginning on April 24, 1916. Led by, among others, Patrick Pearse, they had some success in Dublin, but British troops managed to put down the rebellion after about a week of fighting. The execution of Pearse and other leaders only intensified public support for Sinn Féin, however, paving the way to electoral victory, and the IRA learned that a nationwide uprising could not be effective. In 1919, therefore, the IRA began a guerrilla war against the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), the UK's



Above: Irish revolutionary leader Micheál Ó Coileáin or Michael Collins at the funeral of founder and leader of Sinn Féin Arthur Griffith. Collins was killed in an ambush only six days later.



## THE LONG WAR

Not all IRA members welcomed the Anglo-Irish treaty. Michael Collins, who had signed it, believed that it was the best Ireland could hope to achieve, at least for the time being. Although he was greatly respected by the independence movement for his actions during the war—he had been the IRA's director of intelligence—he could not persuade all of his former comrades. Sinn Féin's elected president, Eamon de Valera, insisted on nothing less than complete independence. Civil war broke out. In 1937 de Valera led the way to a further step toward independence with the establishment of the Irish Free State (Éire), but even this was not sufficient for the diehards of the IRA. The group continued to carry out attacks against British authorities and, after Ireland withdrew from the British Commonwealth in 1949, against Northern Ireland. It became, in fact, a terrorist organization, which set off a bomb as recently as 1996. However, in 2005 the IRA declared an end to violence and vowed to use only peaceful methods to unify the island as one nation.

Top: Éamon De Valera was a leader of Ireland's struggle for independence and dominant political force in 20th century Irish politics. Top center: Map of British Isles, 1818.



Above: Sinn Féin politician Gearoid O'Sullivan took part in the Easter Uprising. Left: A Sinn Féin political poster from 1918



police presence on the island. For the next three years small columns, sometimes numbering no more than twenty men, would attack convoys, seize weaponry, raze British barracks, and—as Britain committed army troops to what they struggled to define as police action—harass enemy combatants.

The IRA enjoyed surprising success in this guerilla war, in part because the British army, although recently transformed into true veterans, had never encountered this type of war before. They had become accustomed to the bloody, inch-by-inch struggles of trench warfare, but in Ireland the only trenches they encountered were those dug across the roads to impede transportation. The “flying columns” of the IRA could appear, join with other columns to achieve objectives, and vanish again, their members disappearing into the general populace. Frustration and the rising number of non-IRIC members generated sometimes horrific RIC retaliations, which only hardened resistance. By the end of the war, the RIC had largely given up on the rural areas and holed up in fortified positions in the towns and cities. Meanwhile, the British populace had grown heartily sick of war and pressed for resolution. Finally, a truce was called in July of 1921 and the Anglo-Irish treaty, recognizing Ireland as a dominion (with required allegiance to Britain), was signed on December 6. Except for Northern Ireland, which—unlike the rest of the island—was primarily Protestant and demographically English or Scottish, Ireland achieved a measure of independence.



# SPANISH CIVIL WAR

The bloody civil war that propelled General Francisco Franco to power in a fascist Spain appears, in retrospect, as the first long battle of World War II. In many ways the civil war, like the world war that followed it, turned on big political ideas: democracy, socialism, communism, or fascism? In other ways it was a military takeover like any other, a coup distinguished only by its unusual length. The causes of the civil war are many and complicated, but the deciding factor was the election in 1936 of a liberal government, supported by socialists, communists, and democrats. The inflamed rhetoric and explosive celebrations of these political parties confirmed the worst fears of Spain's conservatives, who had two major advantages right from the start: the support of both the Roman Catholic Church and the army.



Top right: *General Franco led the nationalists and fascists against the socialists and republicans in the Spanish Civil War of 1936–39.*

## THE MARCH OF FASCISM

On July 17 and 18, 1936, a preplanned military uprising occurred in towns all throughout Spain and in Spanish Morocco, where Franco was placed with his army. The rebels—who called themselves Nationalists—claimed Old Castile, Zaragoza, Sevilla, Córdoba, Valladolid, Cádiz, Granada, Galicia, and part of Andalusia, but their expectation of an immediate takeover was thwarted by the unexpected ferocity of the resistance mounted by people loyal to the government (Republicans) in key cities like Barcelona and Madrid, the capital. Both sides appealed for aid; Mexico, whose support was minimal, and the Soviet Union supported the Republic; Germany and Italy sent men and equipment to the Nationalists. Throughout the war, the Republicans hoped that the democracies of the West—particularly Britain and France—would join them, but these were committed to a policy of appeasement and shied away from anything that might bring the world to war.

As a result, especially after Soviet aid dropped off, the Republicans fought for a lost cause; the Nationalists, supported by Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini in blatant violation of a nonintervention treaty, overwhelmed them. Hitler's aid first

came through for the fascists when he sent planes to transport Franco and his army from Africa to Spain. By the end of 1936 Franco had expanded the rebel territory greatly, taking Irún and Toledo; the Republican government fled to Valencia (Franco established a rebel government in Burgos). Yet Madrid, the grand prize, remained Republican. In 1937 Franco succeeded in taking the northern provinces, the Basques and Asturias, but the Republicans were victorious at the Battle of Guadalajara in March. The horrific (and strategically unnecessary) destruction of Guernica by German planes shocked the democratic world in April, but still no aid came to the beleaguered Republicans.

In December of 1937 the Republicans launched a major offensive at Teruel, but lost it in February; the rest of that spring they were forced back, and back again, in the "Great Retreats." By May 1938 Nationalist forces had divided the Republic, which launched a last offensive over the Ebro River in July. In September hope for foreign intervention fled with the Munich Pact, which handed Czechoslovakia to Germany. Catalonia and Barcelona fell that winter. The war was over with Franco's seizure of Madrid on March 27, 1939. The harshness of Franco's reign, the use of torture and murder during and after the war, makes it difficult to estimate casualties: half a million, perhaps, died.

Below: *The Germans and Italians bombed Guernica, Spain on April 26, 1937 causing widespread destruction.*



Above: *Scenes of destruction on the road to Guadalajara as Franco blockaded the city from the rest of Republican Spain. He then attacked it and was met by a counterattack with Soviet tanks in which many lives were lost.*

Left: *English author George Orwell, like many European left-leaning intellectuals, joined the International Brigade to protect the Popular Front government.*



# ETHNIC CLEANSING

The high-minded idealism of nationalism and self-determination that had shaken the very notion of an empire—a conglomeration of multiple peoples—to its core during World War I and its aftermath had a horrible corollary in campaigns to exterminate members of an opposing group. The word genocide first appeared in 1944, coined by Raphael Lemkin to describe what Winston Churchill called “a crime without a name.” Lemkin argued that genocide had occurred as anciently as Rome’s destruction of Carthage (see pages 126–127), but clearly the devotion of resources, employment of industrial methods, and sheer scale of attempted extirpations in the twentieth century far outstripped anything that had come before. The most famous genocide, the case that allowed Lemkin’s new word to be adopted by the United Nations in 1946, is the Holocaust of World War II, but many scholars point to the mass massacre of Armenians during World War I as the first example of “modern” genocide.

## MASSACRES AND MADNESS

As it did with Serbia, imperial Russia put itself forward as the protector of Armenians, an ethnically distinct community of Christians living in Anatolia under the Ottoman Empire, in the years before World War I. In 1915 the Young Turks accused the Armenians en masse of conspiring with the enemy and resolved to expel them. The events that followed have been described as a genocide by Armenians, a charge vehemently denied by Turkey (the Ottoman successor state). Facts are hard to come by because of poor record-keeping and subjectivity on both sides, with death estimates ranging from as low as 200,000 from Turkish sources to ten times that number from Armenian sources. Arnold J. Toynbee, a British intelligence officer during

World War I, offered what most scholars take to be as accurate an estimate as possible: a death toll of 600,000, plus another 1,200,000 who hid or escaped into exile (the numbers combine to the total prewar Armenian population).

The Ottomans were not the only ones to commit atrocities against a particular segment of their own population. Another serious offender was the Ottoman Empire’s greatest enemy, Russia. Starting well before World War I, Russian Christians periodically carried out pogroms against communities of Jews, a pattern that had existed in Europe since the Middle Ages. Any minority group was—and in many places still is—at risk of demonization and associated brutality.

In Italy, which adopted a fascist government in 1922 under Benito Mussolini, minorities such as the Slovenes and the Croats suffered discrimination and policies intended to forcibly “Italianize” them—a precursor to Mussolini’s plans to establish an Italian Empire along the lines of ancient Rome. The doctrines of fascism, which in Italy as in Germany promulgated racial purity and ethnic supremacy, proved to be particularly virulent catalysts for genocide. The collapse of fascism in the mid-twentieth century unfortunately did not prevent episodes of “ethnic cleansing” from occurring elsewhere, particularly in recent years in the Darfur region of Sudan, Africa, and in Kosovo in Eastern Europe.

## War and Genocide

Most attempts at genocide—from Carthage to Kosovo—occur within or because of a broader war. The United Nations’ Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, however, defines genocide as an international crime “whether committed in time of peace or war.” Acts considered by the UN as genocide not only include killing the members of a given group, but also “causing serious bodily or mental harm . . . ; inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction . . . ; prevent[ing] births . . . ; [or] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.” Genocide can be attempted against “national, ethnical, racial, or religious” groups of people. One primary difference between war and genocide, noted by Raphael Lemkin, is that warfare, conducted legally, pits soldiers against soldiers, but genocide consists of brutality against a civilian population. Moreover, genocide is specifically directed at civilians; while civilians have always died in wars, genocidal policies target them directly.



*The euphemism “ethnic cleansing” is a modern sanitized phrase to express the age-old atrocity of genocide and mass murder of minority racial groups. These images relate to perhaps the first expression of this barbaric element of warfare—the massacre of as many as 800,000 Armenians by Turkish authorities in 1915.*



# EUROPE RETURNS TO WAR

The victors of World War I had hoped to cow Germany's ambitions forever with the restrictive Treaty of Versailles, but they had, in fact, only delayed the final reckoning. Under the fascist Nazi party led by Adolf Hitler, a resentful Germany dedicated itself to becoming a European empire and a world power, goals entwined with a racist and xenophobic program of exterminating "un-Aryan" segments of society, including Roma (gypsies), homosexuals, and Jews.



Postage stamp depicting Adolf Hitler.

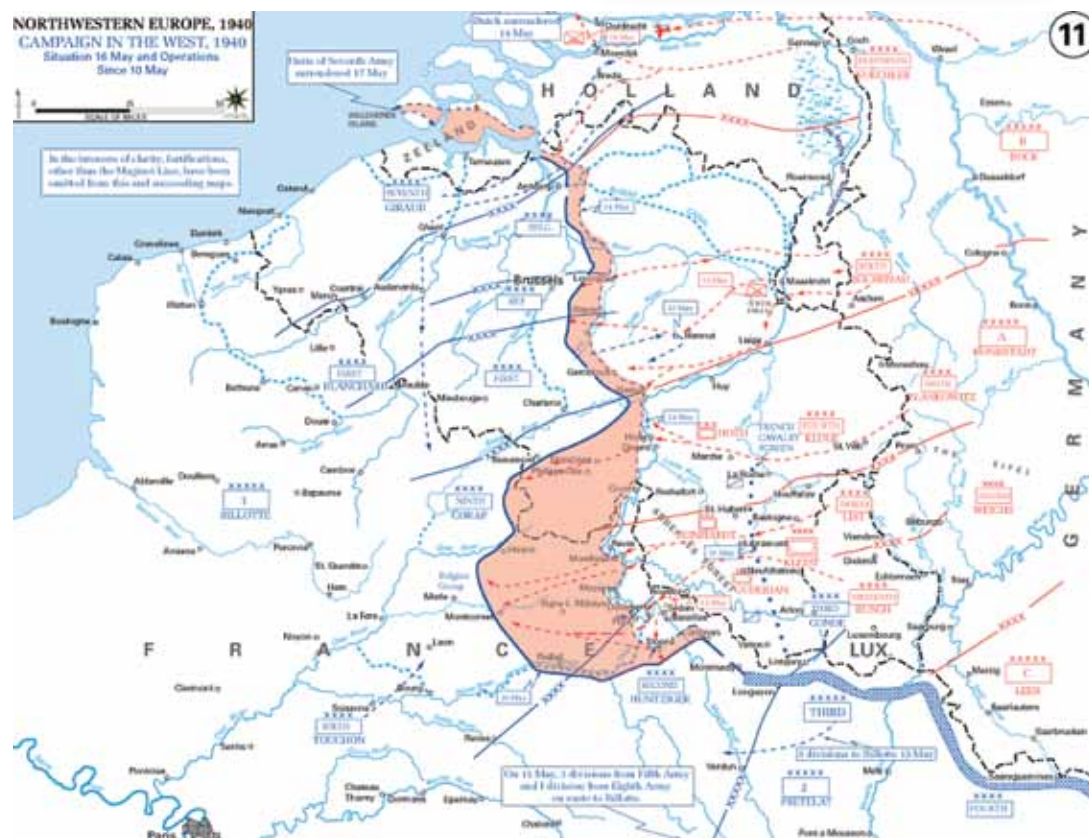


## BLITZKRIEG

On September 1, 1939, the first German troops of World War II invaded Poland. To neutralize the Soviet Union, Germany had agreed to let that country claim part of Poland as well; Soviet troops invaded on September 17. Poland's defenses were inadequate and its army hopelessly caught between two of the world's finest fighting forces: the country fell within weeks. While the Soviets busied themselves with swallowing Finland (an initial fumble did not prevent their ultimate success), Germany invaded Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, all between April 9 and May 13, 1940.



In these early days of the war Germany enjoyed large tactical advantages over its foes. It had superior airplanes, tanks, and an already functioning military-industrial complex. More importantly, Germany had learned the lesson in the final days of World War I that tanks could punch through the old defenses; trench warfare was a thing of the past. Even though France, Britain, and other Western nations also fielded tanks, Germany used its Panzers to far better effect. As a result, with a rapidity that lent the affair the name of "Blitzkrieg," lightning war, it took Germany little more than a month to seize France as far as Paris: France bowed to the inevitable on June 22, 1940. Italy, also run by a fascist government, had thrown its lot in with Germany's and invaded France early that month. Japan joined them on September 27, 1940, signing the Tripartite Pact. This core of the "Axis" was joined later that fall by Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia.



Above: Map showing the Battle of Belgium from May 10–16, 1940. The allies were forced to retreat from continental Europe after Belgium's defeat.



Top Left: The German army march in to Warsaw, Poland. They crushed all opposition in Scandinavia and the Netherlands too.

Far Left: Hitler salutes his troops after their successful blitzkrieg across Europe—literally a "lightning war" involving swift and intense attacks destroying the enemy quickly often with bombing raids.



Middle left and bottom left: Constructed during the interwar years, the Maginot Line was a series of underground fortifications built by the French to protect their eastern border from attack by Germany. The forts were supplied by underground railroads, tanks, and other equipment.



# STANDING ALONE

After France fell in July of 1940, Hitler turned rapacious eyes toward Great Britain, protected by its surrounding waters and the powerful navy that patrolled them. From July until September, German (Luftwaffe) and British (Royal Air Force, or RAF) fighter pilots duked it out in the skies in the Battle of Britain. Despite the initial superiority of German aircraft, the RAF proved capable of rapid response—thanks to the new inventions of radar and land-to-air radio—and beat back even the most determined of German assaults.



Winston Churchill

## Escape from Dunkirk

The efforts of the French and Belgian armies to protect their nations had proved utterly futile; the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) had likewise folded. By May 29, 1940—the day the Belgian army surrendered—the BEF clung precariously to a single port on the English Channel, Dunkirk. Four hundred thousand British, Belgian, and French soldiers faced 1.8 million Germans as Britain marshaled every naval resource it had to rescue them from certain defeat. They were aided by Hitler's arrogance; he stalled the advance on Dunkirk to pick and choose which of his commanders should have the honor of proceeding. In the end, Britain's powerful navy—aided by the conscription of many private small craft, some of which had never been intended for ocean adventures—rescued some



340,000 of the stranded men. The escape, heavily propagandized by the British press, helped shore up British morale; this became a significant factor during the long months of bombing ahead as Britain, alone in Western Europe, remained to stave off the German assault.

Above: Allied troops were evacuated from Dunkirk May 27 to June 4th 1940 and Britain alone faced the might of Nazi Germany.



Top: Four scenes from the Battle of Britain which was waged from August to October 1940 and which became a turning point in Hitler's fortunes. Despite the Blitz bombing of London and other major British cities, ports and airfields, the country's resolve remained firm under Churchill's leadership and with the help of RAF spitfire protected the skies against the Luftwaffe's Messerschmitt and bombers.

Above: Hitler was forced to abandon his invasion plans "Operation Sealion".

Right: Italy entered the war to form the 'Axis' with Germany and take the war into the Mediterranean and North Africa via her navy and army.

## WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE

A precipitous invasion of Greece by the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini forced Germany to alter its plans for the occupation of Europe. Mussolini dreamed of restoring the glory of ancient Rome, but he found himself frustratingly dependant on his more powerful ally, especially after a decisive naval loss to Britain at the Battle of Cape Matapan on March 28, 1941. By then the uneasy truce between Germany and the Soviet Union had worn very thin indeed. The communist Soviets, while philosophically inimical to the democracies of the West, had equally little love for fascists. They also regarded the Slavic countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans as rightfully theirs. Foreseeing conflict, Hitler struck first, invading the Soviet Union on June 22,

1941.





# OPERATION BARBAROSSA

On June 22, 1941, German armies invaded Lithuania, east Poland, and the Ukraine, aiming respectively for Leningrad, Smolensk and Moscow, and Kiev. Hitler's ambitious plan, to conquer Russia as far as the Volga-Archangel line (i.e., the European part) in only four months, started later than planned, thanks to necessary intervention in the Balkans. Even so, at first it seemed Germany would succeed. The Soviets were caught by surprise. It took little more than a week for the Germans to advance 400 miles into Russia; entire Soviet armies were captured in large-scale pincer movements. By December the Germans had advanced to the headwaters of the Volga River, within striking distance of Moscow, but now the winter set in, the advance halted, and the Germans began to suffer worse than the Soviets under the cold and snow.



Above: Germany invaded the USSR in 1941 catching Stalin off guard. He had earlier made a pact with Hitler not to get involved in exchange for the Baltic States, eastern Poland and Bessarabia.

Right: The Battle for Stalingrad became a pivotal moment in the fortunes of Russia and Germany. Led by General Paulus on 23rd August 1942, the battle became one of attrition with close quarter fighting and snipers in the ascendant.



## WAKING THE RUSSIAN BEAR

Beset by determined Soviet counteroffensives that winter, the Germans withdrew, but maintained order and control of crucial cities. The four-month plan had failed, however, and Germany now faced its worst nightmare: a war on two fronts, one of them with the massive Soviet Union, with its apparently inexhaustible supply of soldiers. Germany nevertheless took the offensive again in 1942, striking at Rostov and Stalingrad. Rostov fell quickly, but the Battle of Stalingrad raged for more than six months. Stalingrad is recognized as the European war's major turning point: finally, the German spear-point shattered on the Soviet shield. More than two million combined casualties (including civilians) made Stalingrad one of the bloodiest engagements in history, but the city survived and Germany was crippled—irretrievably, as it turned out.

The Germans retreated to the Donets River, but attacked a Soviet salient at Kursk on July 5, 1943. It was a bad decision,

based on fanciful assumptions that the Soviets were nearing their breaking point. The Battle of Kursk, the largest tank battle in history, marked the last time German strength sufficed for a major summer offensive. Kursk cost the Germans nearly half a million men; the Soviets lost nearly 360,000, but this dent was one from which they could recover; Germany, not the Soviet Union, had been irrevocably depleted. From then on, it would be the Soviets, not the Germans, who would steamroll forward. In 1943 the Soviets retook half of what Germany had taken from them; in 1944 they advanced past their original borders into western Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. In the early months of 1945 the Soviets opened a gaping wound in the German front at Warsaw, advancing as far as Küstrin (40 miles from Berlin) by the end of January.

Far right: In November 1942 in a massive Soviet counterattack took place in which some 270,000 soldiers were encircled and defeated.

Right: Friedrich Paulus surrendered on January 31, 1943 and became a vocal critic of the Nazi regime. He was not released until 1953.





# THE ALLIED INVASION OF EUROPE

The Allies, under the supreme command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, moved to take back Europe from the Axis powers in a series of coordinated amphibious invasions, starting with Italy, in July 1943, and culminating in the Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944 (D-Day). After freeing France from the German occupation in August 1944, the Allies were prepared for a final assault on Germany itself.



## ALLIES IN ITALY

Despite ongoing bombing through the winter of 1940–1941, Germany's plans for invasion were delayed indefinitely. Hitler's armies were busy, at any rate, in the Balkans, Greece, and Central Europe during the summer of 1941. While the Soviet Union bore the brunt of German aggression, its allies—principally, the United Kingdom and the United States—rushed to assemble a force and a strategy capable of freeing not just Europe, but also Axis-occupied areas in Africa and the Pacific. In Europe, Allied forces struck first at the weak point in the Axis alliance: Italy. Fighting in Sicily and on the peninsula from July to October of 1943 wrested the Italian government from Mussolini; Italy declared war on Germany on October 13. But German troops still occupied large portions of the country, and what was left of the Italian army could do little against its former ally.



Top: Italian dictator Mussolini was captured and executed by Italian partisans in 1945.

Above left: Franklin D. Roosevelt with Generals Eisenhower and Patton (left) were key in helping bringing support to Britain.

Above right: Italy was invaded on September 3, 1943, but the Germans still put up fierce resistance. Monte Cassino in 1944.

Left: US troops landing at Omaha Beach as part of the spearhead of the Allies' invasion of German occupied France on June 6, 1944.

Below: Eisenhower was Supreme Commander of the Allied forces for D-Day and its five-pronged attack on France.



## THE FIGHT FOR EUROPE

On June 6, 1944—henceforth known as D-day—American, British, and Canadian troops landed on Normandy beaches that they had code-named Gold, Juno, Sword, Utah, and Omaha. Airborne troops had already landed the night before, and Operation Overlord—the invasion of Normandy with the largest amphibious fleet ever launched—began. Events on Germany's eastern front, plus an attempted coup in Berlin, had shaken German morale, but the Germans had had several years to occupy France, Belgium, and the Netherlands and prepare their defenses. In addition, Hitler was determined to hold the West, and poured resources into the western front.

A breakthrough—quite literally—came on July 31, 1944, when American troops punched through the German line at Avranches. Hitler's extreme responses to the attempted military coup of July 20 robbed the Germans of much-needed veteran leadership: of the 7,000 alleged plotters arrested by the Gestapo,

nearly 5,000 were summarily executed. As a result, the Allies were able to make great, though bloody, strides. Troops from the French Resistance liberated Paris from the Vichy-controlled government on August 25; American troops rolled the Germans back through Belgium and the Netherlands, taking their first German city—Aachen—on October 20, the same day the Soviets took Belgrade. Germany was caught in a trap, but rather than pull back, Hitler's narcissism demanded an offensive. Throwing everything Germany had at the West, German troops successfully opened a salient during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944, but they no longer had the power needed to maintain their advantage.





# END OF THE THIRD REICH

With enemies closing in on two sides, Hitler took the unreasonable approach that he must either conquer the Western Allies immediately or face the eradication of Germany. Careful troop withdrawals and defensive maneuvers would have made for a sounder strategy, but by this point Hitler had rid himself of any adviser who dared dissent; in the echo chamber Hitler's unbalanced voice was the only one heard.

On December 16, 1944, Germany launched its last major offensive. The rapid Allied advance had slowed in the fall, due in part to weather and in part to logistical difficulties: with German forces holding fast to the ports east of Normandy, all Allied supplies had to be ferried across the Channel, trucked through a battered Normandy, and routed slowly to their destinations. It all took fuel (in short supply) and time, which Germany used to marshal its resources. The American troops on the front line were taken by complete surprise; strict radio silence had let no hint of Germany's plans through to the other side.

## Nuts!

As German troops poured into the Ardennes, they began to surround the tiny town of Bastogne. The 28th Infantry Division managed to delay the German advance just long enough to allow the 101st Airborne Division to reach the town first. They arrived on December 19, hours before the German Panzer tanks appeared. The town was quickly surrounded and besieged by an overwhelming force, capable of moving around invisibly thanks to the cold fog that hung above the ground. The Germans demanded the Americans surrender. In response, General Anthony McAuliffe sent a one-word response: "Nuts!" The crude American slang befuddled the Germans, who asked for clarification: "It is the same as 'Go to Hell,'" explained Colonel Joseph Harper. The Germans vowed to send the irreverent 101st straight there, but the Americans hung on despite the overwhelming odds until the weather cleared, the Allies counterattacked, and the siege was lifted.

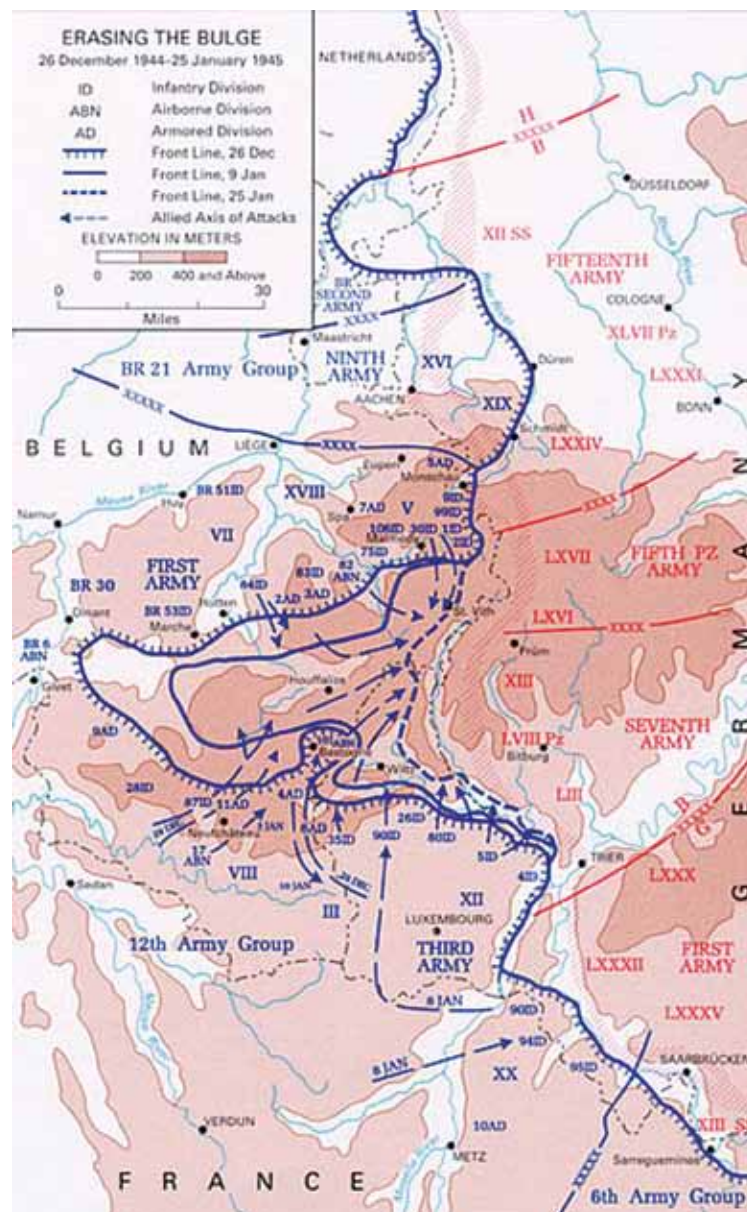
## THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Germany struck in the Ardennes region of Belgium with Panzer divisions, aiming for the port of Antwerp (which Germany had lost the previous September). Aided by the cold, foggy weather, which prevented Allied aircraft from counterattacking, by December 24 the German advance had penetrated Allied lines almost to the Meuse River, creating a salient known as "the bulge." Desperate skirmishes fought by isolated Allied pockets echoed throughout the Ardennes forests. Finally, on December 23, the weather began to clear. American aircraft took to the sky and Allied reinforcements began to arrive: the German advance slowed, halted, and then, under the onslaught of American counterattacks, reversed.

Germany had thrown 200,000 men at a narrow point on the Allied line, meeting fewer than half that number of Allied troops in battle, but Germany was exhausted. Its troops withdrew in order by January 16, but the 100,000 casualties the Battle of the Bulge had cost the country proved far too high (not to mention the 600 ruined tanks and 1,600 downed aircraft). From one perspective the German offensive was a heroic last gasp; from another, it was a monumental strategic failure.

But Germany could no longer field the necessary armies to continue offensive maneuvers, and by mid-January the Allies had won the "Battle of the Bulge."

Exhausted from the war, and robbed of its ability to defend itself by Hitler's irrational winter offensive, Germany folded before the Allied advance. On April 30, 1945, with the Allies only 60 miles from Berlin, Hitler committed suicide. On May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered.



Above: General Anthony McAuliffe Commander of the 101st Airborne Division addressing his men before parachuting into Normandy as part of D-Day's Operation Market Garden. Top right: He also led troops at the Battle of the Bulge (a major German offensive that ultimately failed, map inset), in which his reply to a German ultimatum of surrender was Nuts!"



Major Campaigns and Events in World War II (Europe)	
September 1, 1939	Germany invades Poland
September 17, 1939	Soviet Union invades Poland
November 30, 1939	Soviet Union invades Finland (repulsed)
February 1, 1940	Soviet Union reinvades Finland
April 9, 1940	Germany invades Norway
May 10, 1940	Germany invades the Netherlands (surrenders May 13)
May 10, 1940	Germany invades Belgium
May 10, 1940	Winston Churchill becomes Britain's Prime Minister
May 13, 1940	Germany invades France (over Meuse River)
May 26–June 4, 1940	Evacuation of BEF, French, and Belgian soldiers from Dunkirk
June 10, 1940	Italy attacks France
June 14, 1940	Germany takes Paris
June 22, 1940	Franco-German Armistice
July 10–October 12	Battle of Britain (RAF successfully defends Britain against the Luftwaffe)
August 30, 1940	Vienna Award: Germany and Italy grant parts of Romania to Hungary
September 27, 1940	Tripartite Pact signed between Germany, Italy, and Japan (the Axis)
October 12, 1940	German military mission arrives in Romania
October 28, 1940	Italy invades Greece
November 1940	Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia join the Axis
November 1940–May 1941	The Blitz (German bombing campaign against London and other British targets)
March 1, 1941	Bulgaria joins the Axis
March 18, 1941	Yugoslavia joins the Axis
March 27, 1941	Yugoslavian coup d'état; Yugoslavia reverts to neutrality
March 28, 1941	Battle of Cape Matapan (British naval victory over Italy)
April 6, 1941	Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece
April 17, 1941	Yugoslavia surrenders
May 31, 1941	German occupation of Greece and Aegean complete
June 22, 1941	Germany invades the Soviet Union
December 11, 1941	Germany declares war on the United States
August 23, 1942–January 31, 1943	Battle of Stalingrad (Soviets defeat Germans)
July 5, 1943–August 23, 1943	Battle of Kursk (Soviet Union successfully defends against German offensive and drives forward in counteroffensive)
July 10, 1943	Allied troops land on Sicily
July 25, 1943	King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy orders Benito Mussolini's arrest
September 8, 1943	Italy capitulates; but German troops still control strategic areas
October 13, 1943	Italy declares war on Germany
July 3, 1944	Soviets take Minsk
June 6, 1944	D-Day (Allied invasion of occupied France)
July 20, 1944	Attempted military coup in Berlin misfires
July 31, 1944	American troops break German line at Avranches
August 20, 1944	Soviets attack Germans in Bessarabia
August 23, 1944	New government in Romania
August 25, 1944	Romania declares war on Germany
August 25, 1944	French troops liberate Paris
October 20, 1944	American troops take Aachen
October 20, 1944	Soviets take Belgrade
December 16, 1944–January 16, 1945	Battle of the Bulge (major German offensive with initial success)
January 12, 1945	Soviet Union begins offensive on Eastern Front
January 17, 1945	Soviets capture Warsaw
January 21, 1945	Soviet army at Küstrin (40 miles from Berlin)
February 4–11, 1945	Yalta Conference between Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill divides Eastern Europe and Germany into zones
February 13, 1945	Soviets capture Budapest
February 13–April 17, 1945	RAF decimates Dresden
March 1945	Allied armies cross the Rhine
April 11, 1945	Allied armies reach the Elbe River (60 miles from Berlin)
April 30, 1945	Hitler commits suicide
May 8, 1945	Germany surrenders



Top: An abandoned Tiger tank (top) debris from the most mechanised war the world had ever seen.

Above: Victory recorded in American newspapers while Allied troops march victoriously through the Champ Elysees in Paris.

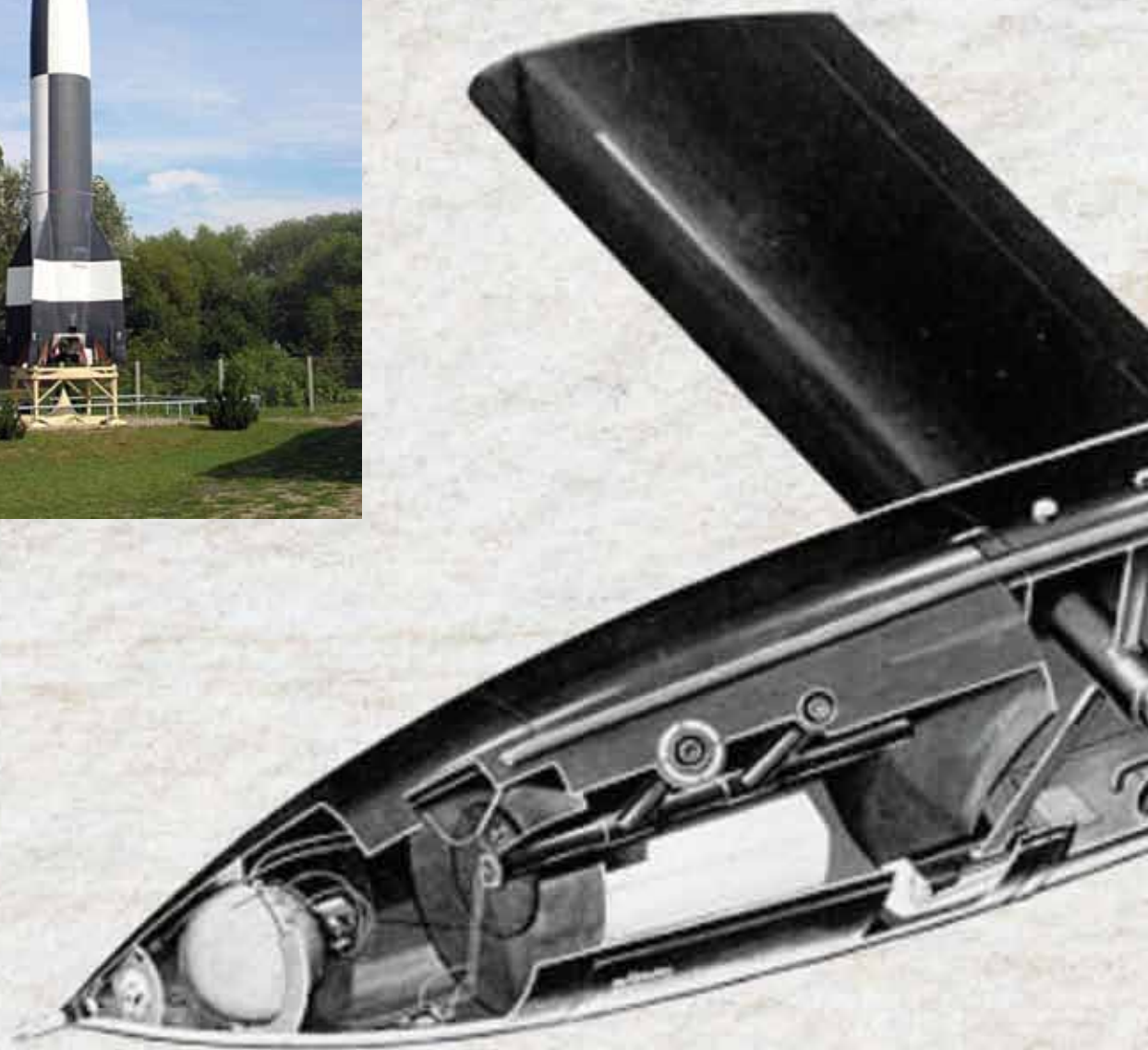


# ROCKETS

The military history of the rocket—a device powered by ejecting mass at high velocity—dates at least to thirteenth-century China, also in all likelihood the place of origin for gunpowder. Although very crude rockets may have been used in late medieval Europe, rockets did not truly become viable weapons until the mid-twentieth century. During World War II, top-secret German programs were aimed at developing the world's first strategic missiles, the V-1 and the V-2. (The “V” stands for Vergeltungswaffen, “vengeance weapon.”) The V-1, developed by the Luftwaffe, was a cruise missile, meaning that it stayed within the atmosphere and operated on the same principles as more traditional aircraft. The V-2, developed by a formerly amateur rocket enthusiast named Wernher von Braun whose work caught the attention of the military, was a ballistic missile: a missile whose initial propulsion provides its momentum along an arcing trajectory that may carry it, at its peak, above the atmosphere.

## Space Race

Von Braun's early interest in rockets stemmed not from their use as weapons but as vehicles for space travel, a dream that—thanks largely to his V-2 design—became a reality in the 1960s. Rocket design for weapons and space exploration went hand-in-hand, and during the Cold War the effort to reach space, and more precisely the Moon, became a highly politicized race between the United States and the Soviet Union, each of which adopted German technology and even German scientists (von Braun worked for the United States after the war) in the 1940s. The Soviets reached space first, launching the world's first manmade satellite, Sputnik, in 1957, but it was the United States that won the Space Race by becoming the first nation to land a man on the Moon in 1969.



Center: *The V-1 flying bomb was also known as the Doodlebug—and was an early type of cruise missile powered by pulse-jets. It was developed at Peenemünde Airfield by the German Luftwaffe during World War II. It was designed for terror bombing of London, the V-1 was fired from “ski” launch sites along the French and Dutch coasts.*  
 Left from top: *The V-2 was a liquid propelled ballistic missile also built to target London. It developed into the first long-range combat rocket and the first to enter outer space and eventually became the template for the US's and USSR's space programs.*



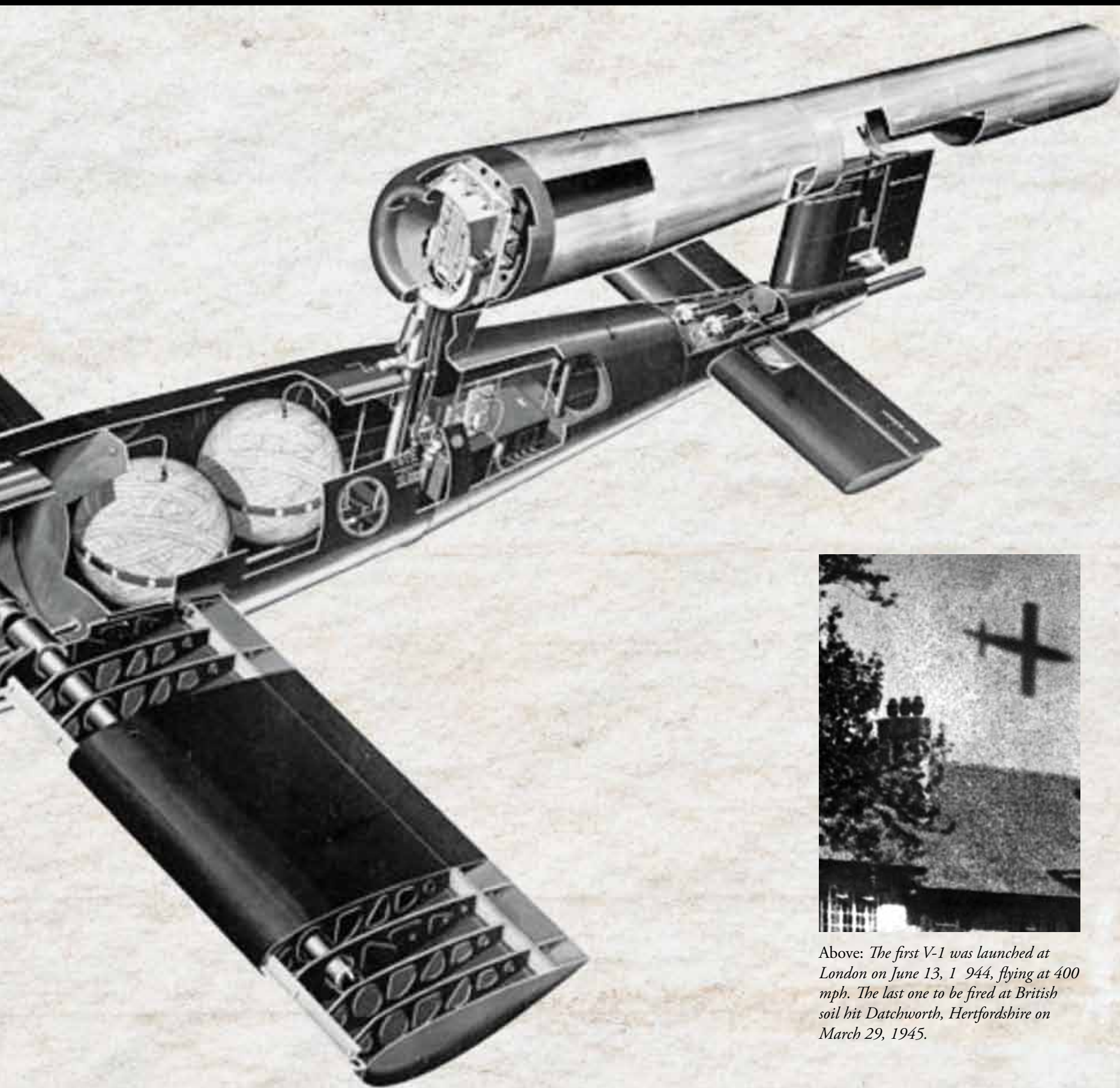
## VENGEANCE WEAPONS

Von Braun had been experimenting with rockets as a member of the German Society for Space Travel since 1930, but experimentation suffered from a lack of funding until 1932, when Walter R. Dornberger, a captain and later a major general, picked up both the program and von Braun. Germany's attempts to create a missile weapon were frustratingly slow and crushingly expensive, but as World War II began to turn against him, Adolf Hitler came to rely more and more on his "vengeance weapons," which were unleashed in 1944. In the last two years of the war Germany launched nearly 3,000 V-2s and almost ten times as many V-1s. London was the favorite target, although France, Belgium, and other liberated European countries were also hit. The V-1 was easier to produce, but the V-2 killed more people per strike—although not enough (on average five, compared with the V-1's three) to make a real difference.

Neither vengeance weapon every fully overcame its technical difficulties, the most frustrating of which (for Germany) was inaccuracy. Missiles aimed at London, launched from northern France or (in the case of V-2s) the western

coast of the Netherlands might land anywhere from East Anglia to Southampton, rendering them highly costly and inefficient weapons. They did, however, succeed in instilling terror in the citizenry at whom they were aimed; unless intercepted by fighter pilots, barrage balloons, or antiaircraft fire, the missiles fell so fast that there was no predicting and no avoiding them.

The ultimate ineffectiveness of Hitler's vengeance weapons did not prevent other nations from seizing the technology and improving on it after the war. Today, the most powerful armies include cruise and ballistic missiles in their arsenals as a matter of course, and technological advancements make them far deadlier and more precise than their predecessors. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union developed ballistic missiles capable of reaching targets more than 3,500 miles away. Called intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), these powerful rockets can be equipped with nuclear warheads, making them truly terrifying weapons. More common are IRBMs (intermediate-range ballistic missiles), with ranges of less than 3,500 miles.



Above: The first V-1 was launched at London on June 13, 1944, flying at 400 mph. The last one to be fired at British soil hit Datchworth, Hertfordshire on March 29, 1945.



# KOSOVO CONFLICT

Ever since the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, which had ruled the region for 500 years, the Balkans roiled. Two world wars, the rise and fall of the Soviet Union, and global calcification of Christian-Muslim tension did nothing to stabilize the region, once called (pre-World War I) the “powder keg of Europe.” In the late 1990s this powder key blew up again as the Republic of Yugoslavia fractured into contentious new nations. At the heart of the conflict was Kosovo, a former Yugoslavian province that in 1974 had been granted a large measure of autonomy. President Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia (by then including only Serbia and Montenegro) stripped Kosovo of its autonomy in 1984. At the same time he enacted restrictions on ethnic Albanians (majority Muslim), actions supported by Yugoslavian’s majority Serbian (Orthodox Christian) population, who had complained of discrimination in Kosovo, which had a primarily Albanian population.



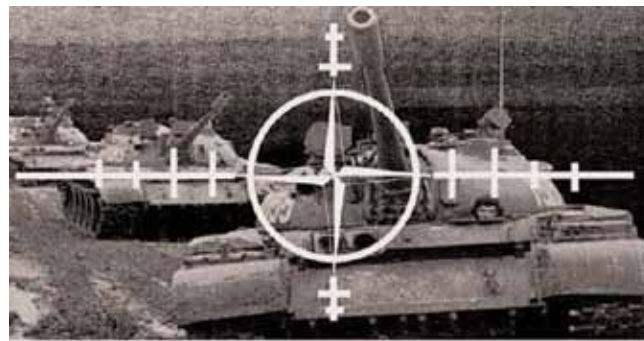
Above: Ruins near the border of Albania and Kosovo, near Moravia.

## TERROR IN KOSOVO

Attempts to secure Kosovo’s independence by peaceful means, headed by the Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova, did not succeed. In 1996, when violence against Muslims in neighboring Bosnia prompted the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to intervene militarily, Kosovo fielded the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), decried as a terrorist organization by some (including, naturally, Milosevic) but hailed as freedom fighters by Kosovo’s civilians. For two years the international community watched in alarm as violence between the KLA and Yugoslavian forces escalated. Milosevic began a program of “ethnic cleansing” that sent thousands of refugees fleeing into neighboring countries, some of them bearing horrific tales of atrocities committed by the authorities, and threatening to further destabilize the region.

In June of 1998 NATO flew eighty-five warplanes over Kosovo in an effort to intimidate Milosevic. Violence continued, however, intensifying especially in the Drenica region, and evidence of brutality mounted. Retaliations occurred on both sides. In October NATO approved a small-scale bombing campaign, but Milosevic withdrew thousands of Serbian police, military, and paramilitary forces from Kosovo. Over the winter, however, violence flared up again, this time along the Macedonian border and near Podujevo. After a Serbian massacre of forty-five Kosovar Albanians in January 1999, United States Secretary of State Madeleine Albright convinced NATO to reapprove its plan of military intervention.

Peace talks held in Rambouillet, France, fell apart in March. NATO sent warplanes—this time not for show—on March 24, 1999. Yugoslavia broke diplomatic ties with NATO countries. The Albanian army, concerned for the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, became involved, clashing with the Yugoslavian army. NATO bombing continued until June 20, by which point 20,000 international troops had established positions in Kosovo.



### Attention:

78th Motorized Brigade, 211th Armor Brigade,  
52nd and 78th Mixed Artillery, and attached units:

**You are a NATO bombing target.**

You will continue to be bombed until you return to your garrisons. Return while you still can.

Above: A NATO flyer from the Kosovo War in 1999.



Top: Serbian detainees being released to Serbian authorities in Kosovo in 1999.



Above: A Soviet-built T-55 tank used by Serbian troops, near Prizren, Kosovo.

Yugoslavia had no choice but to withdraw; when the KLA disarmed, in accordance with NATO commands, in September, the conflict was declared resolved. Sporadic violence continues, however, even after Yugoslavia divided in 2006 into Montenegro and Serbia; Serbia still claims Kosovo as a province, even though Kosovo declared independence in 2008. Milosevic was arrested in 2000 for war crimes.



Above: Slobodan Milosevic at the Dayton Peace Accords. The talks ended the conflict arising from the breakup of Yugoslavia. A peace agreement was signed on December 14, 1995.



# DISSOLUTION OF THE USSR

The Soviet Union collapsed in the maelstrom of revolutions in 1989, following a period of economic decline and increasing political instability. The fifteen Soviet Socialist Republics that made up the USSR each became independent, but this hardly settled matters. In many regions, particularly in the Caucasus and Central Asia, ethnic conflict continues to bedevil the former Soviet republics and regions. Of these, two examples suffice to demonstrate the complexity and intractability of the problems.



## CONFLICT IN CHECHNYA

The Chechens' objection to Russian involvement in their southeastern portion of Europe dates back to well before the formation of the Soviet Union, let alone its collapse. The ongoing conflict in Chechnya can, in fact, be said to have begun in the eighteenth century, when Russia expanded into the Caucasus at the expense of the Ottoman Empire: the name Chechen refers to the village, Chechen-Aul, where the first Russian-Chechen battle occurred in 1732. Like the related Ingush, the Chechen are predominantly Muslim and maintained resistance to Russian rule for decades, well into the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, the Chechen people took advantage of other distracting political events like the Russian Revolution and World War II to stage uprisings.

In 1936 the Soviet Union allowed the Chechen and Ingush peoples to form a republic of their own, but during World War II unrest in the region resulted in massive deportations, the dissolution of the republic (re-formed in 1957), and other oppressions. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the union divided into Ingushetiya and Chechnya, led from 1991 by the anti-Russian Dzhokhar Dudayev, who faced armed opposition from within Chechnya itself. Russia supported these rebel groups, going so far as to invade in 1994. Fighting continued—despite Dudayev's death in 1996—until 1997, but in 1999 resumed after Russian President Vladimir Putin blamed Chechen rebels for bombing attacks in Russia.

As in 1994, Russian troops slowly managed to occupy the country despite determined opposition, but the Chechens adopted guerilla tactics and are blamed for the death of the pro-Russian president Akhmad Kadyrov in 2004. Despite claims by both Russia and the pro-Russian president in 2009 that the rebel organization was dismantled, incidents continue to occur sporadically and the threat of another Chechan war remains. The situation there responds to volatile factors like the Caucasian oil fields—one of the features that makes the Caucasus so strategically valuable—the influence wielded by Turkey (whose Muslim inhabitants share cultural features with the Chechen), and violence in surrounding regions, particularly Georgia.

## GEORGIA BREAKS OFF

Georgia, one of the largest nations in the Caucasus, was one of the fifteen states formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It shares its longest border with Russia and contains several ethnicities. One of these, the Ossetes, form two thirds of the population of South Ossetia, a region within Georgia's borders with strong ties to North Ossetia, a neighboring region in Russia.

Even before the dissolution of the USSR, Russian troops were required to quell an independence movement that sought unification with North Ossetia and autonomy; since then, the Ossetes have struggled against both Georgia and Russia. In 2008 South Ossetia declared its independence and Russia formally recognized it as a nation; when Georgian troops moved into the region to combat the separatists, Russian troops again marched into Ossetia, ostensibly to defend Russian citizens there and aid the fledgling nation, whose independence movement was soon mimicked by Abkhazia. Fighting has ended, but Russia's continued recognition of Ossetia and Abkhazia, plus its troops stationed there, still generates friction with Georgia.



Above: A Chechen man prays during the battle for Grozny. In the background a gas pipeline blazes, after being hit by shrapnel.

Left: A topographic map of the North Caucasus, in Ossetic.

Below: The flag of Abkhazia.

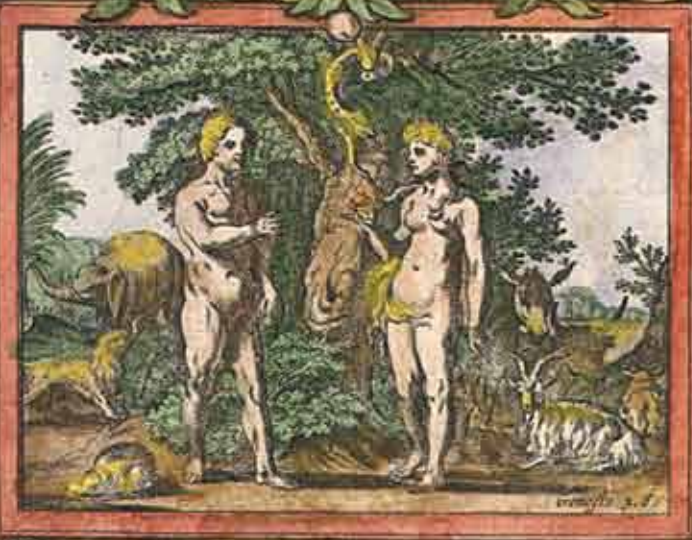


Left: A woman with her badly burned child, injured during the Chechen conflict.

Above: The Georgian army marching along Rustaveli Avenue, Tbilisi, in a military parade during the Independence Day celebration.



DE GELEGENTHEYT VAN 'T PARADYS ENDE 'T LANDT  
Der Patriarchen, uyt de H. Schrifture en verscheyde



MIDDELANTSCH E ZEE in den  
Bybel de GROOTE ZEE genaemt.

Jonas vliet voor  
den Aeere

Iapho ofte Ioppe  
van waer Jonas  
ter Zee afvoer

Nabathea  
ofte in Hebreus  
Nabaioth





# 3

## THE MIDDLE EAST

Some of the world's most important early civilizations—the Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians—developed in the curved region formed by the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers (Mesopotamia) and the Eastern Mediterranean coast (the Levant), known as the Fertile Crescent. The Nile Valley is sometimes included in the Crescent as well. Between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea, powerful city-states arose at the dawn of human history. Located at the crossroads between Asia, Europe, and Africa, the Middle East offered wealth and power to any nations lucky enough to gain a foothold there, frequently tempting neighboring competitors and luring ambitious invaders such as Alexander the Great from Macedonia, and the Roman general Pompey.

The region is also home to sites and cities considered sacred to all three Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—with the tragic consequence of innumerable religious wars on its ancient hallowed ground, from the Jewish revolts in the first century AD, to the Crusades of the Middle Ages, through twentieth- and twenty-first-century clashes among Muslim sects and between various Muslim nations and the states of Israel.





# SUMER

Long considered the “cradle of civilization,” ancient Mesopotamia birthed some of the world’s earliest cities—and gave rise to some of its earliest wars. Many of the most impressive ancient technologies evolved in this region, including writing, agriculture, and the domestication of animals such as goats and pigs, and from about 4000–3500 BC wealthy and socially sophisticated city-states matured at the very dawn of human history.

Unfortunately, the region did not remain peaceful for long, if indeed it ever was. City-states warred over territory and resources, a number of them becoming multigenerational enemies whose antagonism helped inspire some of the world’s first heroic literature and spurred military innovation. Historically accurate details are hard to come by, but it can be deduced from the art, literature, and archaeology of the period that conflict troubled Mesopotamia almost from the beginning.

## Vultures over Gu’edena

Although less famous than Uruk and Kish, the victory of Lagash over Umma represents a more accurate historical record of early Mesopotamian combat. Preserved most vividly in the fragments of the Stele of the Vultures—so-called for the prominence of the corpse-eating birds carved into the monument—the conflict lasted for several generations and focused on Gu’edena (or Gu-Edin), a particularly fertile region claimed by both cities. A king of Kish, who was possibly the nominal ruler of the entire area, negotiated a settlement but the peace did not last. When Eannatum, the king of Lagash (c. 2450 BC), perceived that Umma was building up his forces in preparation to forcibly annex Gu’edena, he marched to war. Several battles followed, but Eannatum was ultimately successful. Although not included in the Sumerian King List, an ancient manuscript that listed the kings of Sumer and neighboring dynasties, Eannatum aggressively conquered much of the surrounding territory and established an independent dynasty, ruling over not just Lagash’s capital city, Girsu, but also neighboring cities (including Nina, the precursor to Nineveh) and several smaller settlements.

## THE WALLS OF URUK

Likely the most famous of ancient Mesopotamian figures is the hero Gilgamesh, tentatively identified by historians as the fifth king in the First Dynasty of Uruk. Uruk (or Erech), which was in this period the most impressive of Mesopotamia’s urban centers, took over control of the region from Kish. According to ancient Sumerian epic, it was Gilgamesh himself who defeated the king of Kish, Agga (or Akka), in a conflict that has been dated to about 2660 BC. In the poem “Gilgamesh and Agga,” the king of Kish lays siege to Uruk but is defeated by the city’s mighty walls and captured.

Uruk’s walls—raised, again according to Sumerian legend, by Gilgamesh—were famous in their own time, and archaeologists have confirmed that Uruk’s walls were indeed impressive, measuring six miles and punctuated by 900 towers. Walls were a new idea, as were the cities they surrounded, and suggest the ubiquity of war in the region, even if the Gilgamesh–Agga conflict is unhistorical.

## THE ARMIES OF MESOPOTAMIA

The rise of city-states in the late fourth millennium BC seems to coincide with the development of armies and organized warfare. Beyond defensive innovations, such as walls, there are scenes preserved on clay cylinder seals from Uruk, dating roughly to 3300–3100 BC, that seem to show the execution of prisoners of war. Shown elsewhere, from about the same time period, are the earliest depictions of armies, primarily infantrymen armed with spears, axes, or (according to “Gilgamesh and Agga”) maces. Chariots also make an appearance in early Mesopotamian war scenes, such as the famous “Standard of Ur,” an artifact recovered from a royal grave at the city of Ur, although at this early date chariots were pulled not by horses but donkeys and were transportation devices, not war machines. Chariots were not common: in some depictions only the king rides in a chariot.



Above: *Ashurbanipal depicted with a lion—the symbol of a monarch’s protection of his or her subjects.*



Left: *A fragment of the Stele of the Vultures, celebrating King Eannatum of Lagash’s victory over neighboring city-state, Umma.*



Right: *The Sumerian civilization existed in what is now northern Iraq.*



# SARGON OF AKKAD

Sometime in the late twenty-fourth or early twenty-third century BC the ruler of Agade, an Akkadian city located near Babylon, renamed himself Sargon (“the king is legitimate,” or “the rightful king”) and conquered the city-states of Sumer, located to the southeast. Based on this action, many historians believe him to be the first in a long line of Middle Eastern empire builders, forging a large state comprising several different ethnicities, languages, and culture groups.

Below: *A clay tablet with a cuneiform account of the barley rations issued each month: 30 to 40 pints for adults, and 20 pints to children.*

## THE RIGHTFUL KING

A lack of contemporary sources has forced historians to rely on late literary and legendary accounts for Sargon’s life, supported as much as possible by archaeological excavations. Little can be said with certainty: even the dates of Sargon’s reign, usually given as c. 2334–2279 BC, cannot truly be fixed. The existence of his empire, however, is indisputable, and if its precise borders are unknown, even a conservative estimate speaks to Sargon’s abilities as a military general and administrator.

Sargon waged his first campaign against Lugalzaggisi, a king of Uruk who claimed lordship over all Sumer. Dissatisfaction with this arrangement might have led some Sumerian city-states to abandon their ruler, making it easy for the invading Akkadians to divide and conquer the region. First Kish fell, then Uruk, Ur, Lagash, and the rest of Sumer. Sargon supposedly fought thirty-four battles there, capturing fifty *ensis* (rulers). Conquering Sumeria allowed Akkad direct access to the Persian Gulf and all its lucrative trading opportunities, but Sargon—said in the (admittedly unreliable) Sumerian King List to have ruled for fifty-six years—was not finished.

Sargon was the first ruler in recorded history to maintain a standing army (numbering, according to late sources, 5,400 men), and after conquering Sumer he turned west against Mari, Tuttul, Ebla—where archaeology does confirm some military destruction taking place roughly during Sargon’s time—the “Cedar Forest” (Palestine), and the “Silver Mountains” (Anatolia). Late legend extends Sargon’s control as far west as Cyprus. In the east, Sargon invaded Elam, taking the capital city of Susa, an event that was recorded by contemporary annals. Sargon’s exploits impressed the people he conquered and ruled to such an extent that he became legendary, considered by Mesopotamians for millennia to be the founder of Mesopotamian military traditions.



## The King’s Daughter

Perhaps in a political ploy to secure his control in Sumer and demonstrate the favor of the local gods, Sargon installed his daughter, Enheduanna, as high priestess in the temple of the moon god Nanna at Ur, where today the remains of the holy ziggurat are some of the best-preserved ruins in Mesopotamia. In Akkadian art, women appear with great infrequency; Enheduanna is virtually unique for appearing—along with her name, an even rarer event—on artifacts. She also has the distinction of being the world’s first named author, and two of the hymns she composed in honor of her gods still survive today.

Far left: *The Burnley Relief, also called “Queen of the Night,” is a terracotta plaque thought to be a representation of the Sumerian goddess Ishtar.*



# BABYLON

Babylon, the most famous of ancient Mesopotamia's cities, came to dominate the region due almost solely to one man: Hammurabi. When Hammurabi ascended to Babylon's throne in c. 1792 BC, southern Mesopotamian politics had become a shifting web of alliances and coalitions. In the north, the powerful kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia (Assyria) had already faltered with the death of its king, Shamshi-Adad, in 1776 BC. The mighty state of Elam lay to the east, while various hill tribes lay all around the Fertile Crescent, in Anatolia, the Zagros Mountains, and Syria. All these peoples, nations, and cities struggled in turn against and in support of each other, each seeking to dominate; but every time one seemed ascendant, the others would unite against the rising power.

## Water as Weapon

Hammurabi's armies consisted primarily of infantrymen armed with bows and arrows, axes, and spears of bronze or even copper. They bore shields which, when threatened by enemy arrows, could be lain edge over edge, to form a sort of turtle shell above them, and they were likely supported by chariots. But Hammurabi is thought to have unleashed a greater weapon than any of these, all of which were also fielded by his opponents: water. All of Mesopotamia's cities were located on either the Tigris or the Euphrates, whose waters bestowed life to a region otherwise dominated by arid desert.

When combating Larsa in 1763, Hammurabi built a temporary dam across the Euphrates, waited for the city to weaken from the lack of this most necessary substance, and then broke the dam, releasing the pent-up waters in a terrific flood that allowed him to take the city with relative ease. Later, he would use similar tactics against Eshnunna, whose walls were damaged in a flood likely caused by Hammurabi.

The incredible importance of water in the region makes it a potent weapon indeed, and it was used again as a weapon in the twentieth century when the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein diverted the water from the marshes in a nearly successful attempt to eradicate the Marsh Arabs who lived there.

Top: *The Tigris River, Amida (present-day Dyrabakirir)*  
Above right: *This map shows the Babylonian Empire at its peak, when it stretched from Egypt across the northern part of the Arabian peninsula and western Asia Minor, with borders on the Mediterranean, Black, and Caspian Seas.*



Above: *A baked-clay tablet of Zimri-Lim, king of Mari, concerning the foundation of an ice-house in Terqa (in modern-day Syria).*

## THE CAMPAIGNS OF HAMMURABI

In 1779 BC, a Syrian tribesman named Zimri-Lim took control of the city of Mari, previously ruled by the Assyrian king at Eshnunna. The king of Elam, Siwe-palar-huppak, seized the opportunity, allied himself with Mari and Babylon, and invaded. By 1769 Elam controlled Eshnunna. Siwe-palar-huppak tried to press his advantage, but Hammurabi of Babylon convinced Zimri-Lim to turn against their former partner and in 1764 they, joined by Aleppo, marched against Elam. After they raised the siege of Razama, Elam, which had already lost the cities of Mankisum and Upi, was confronted by a revolt in Eshnunna, and withdrew.

Hammurabi moved quickly. First, he marched against Larsa in the south, an old and powerful rival. Larsa's defeat in 1763 BC afforded Hammurabi firm control of southern Mesopotamia

but exposed his ambition and a coalition formed against him. Eshnunna, Assyria, and the Gutti tribesmen of the Zagros met Hammurabi in battle in 1761—and lost.

Only one obstacle stood between Hammurabi and dominance of the Euphrates: Hammurabi's loyal ally, Zimri-Lim. Friendship notwithstanding, Hammurabi moved against Mari in 1761 BC and laid waste to the city. Hammurabi had been at war unceasingly for eight years, but he was not yet finished. Now he sent his armies to the upper Tigris, where they defeated the remnant of the anti-Babylonian coalition and, in the final act to secure Hammurabi's empire, took Eshnunna—the former capital of Assyria—in 1756 BC. The Babylonian Empire had been born.



# ASSYRIA

Assyria had been a major power for brief periods from the thirteenth century BC on, but since around 1100 BC had suffered a decline in her fortunes. That began to change in 911 BC with Adad-nirari's coronation. He engaged in a series of conquests that strengthened Assyria and enlarged her borders; his reign is now recognized as the first of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Early expansion peaked under the reign of Adad-nirari's brilliant grandson, Ashurnasirpal II, who ruled 883–859 BC.

Ashurnasirpal II became one of the first military leaders to mount his archers on horses; one of his successors, Ashurbanipal (668–627 BC) would be the first to fully incorporate cavalry into his armed forces. Ashurnasirpal ruthlessly put down revolts, using public executions, torture, and forced relocation of subjugated peoples to eliminate dissent. Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, he embarked on a series of campaigns, particularly to the north and west, and restored the empire to the size it held in the thirteenth century BC. He erected fortresses to protect Assyria's vulnerable heartland and built a new capital, Kalhu. His campaigns brought wealth not only from the spoils of war, but also—as he undoubtedly intended—from the Mediterranean trade routes he seized.



## TIGLATH-PILESER III AND ASHURBANIPAL

Ashurnasirpal's son, Shalmaneser III (ruled 858–834 BC) expanded the borders of the empire still farther, although he was unable to seize Damascus even after several attempts. After his reign the empire began slowly to decline, until in 745 a general overthrew the king and established himself on the throne. Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 BC) directed his energies unceasingly to conquering or, as with Syria, reconquering, territories and doubled the size of Assyria's army. He succeeded where Shalmaneser III had not, conquering Damascus in 732 and Babylon in 729 BC.

Assyria did not reach its full potential, however, until Ashurbanipal (r. 668–627 BC) assumed the throne. He followed up on the successes of his father, Esarhaddon, in Egypt, but was primarily concerned with events to the southeast. Elam attacked Babylonia, ruled by Ashurbanipal's brother, twice, the second time suffering a terrible defeat by Ashurbanipal. But Ashurbanipal's brother revolted. He expected support from, among others, Elam, Arab tribesmen, and Egypt, but they either never arrived or were defeated by Ashurbanipal. For two or three years Ashurbanipal laid siege to Babylon, finally taking the city in 648 BC. His brother died in his burning palace, the city collapsing around him.



Above: *Tiglath-Pileser III, king of Assyria (745–727 BC), depicted in a stela from a wall of his castle.*

Left: *A detail from the eastern suite of Ashurnasirpal II's northwestern palace in Kalhu.*



# HURRIANS AND HITTITES

Sometime in the latter half of the seventeenth century BC, the Hittites, a rising power who may have migrated from the north of the Black Sea, would make history by becoming the first Anatolian civilization to make war outside of Anatolia. The Hittites made their homeland in Kussara but under King Hattusilis (r. c. 1650–1620 BC) moved their capital to Hattusas (Bogazkoy). Hattusilis was a conqueror by inclination and, after battling a family rival to a stalemate, moved against the kingdom of Aleppo, sacking Alalakh (Tell Atchana). Then he switched battlefields entirely, moving against the kingdom of Arzawa in southwestern Anatolia, but was forced to rush east to combat a new threat: the Hurrians, a Semitic people originally based in the Zagros Mountains, had invaded.



*A silver ingot with Hittite hieroglyphs.*



*Above: An Ancient Hittite rhyton (drinking horn) with the head of a bull.*

*Above right: A panoramic view of Alanya.*



## THE MITANNI EMPIRE

The Hurrian people's expansion reached a peak when they formed the Mitanni Empire, whose ruling class may not have been Hurrian at all but Indo-Europeans who had invaded some time earlier (but who had apparently accepted Hurrian culture). The empire developed around 1500 BC and expanded to its largest extent about a century later when it took over Assyria, Arrapha, and Kizzuwatna. Its location made it of crucial importance in ancient Near Eastern international politics, and Mitanni appears in Babylonian, Hittite, and Egyptian records as a major power. Archaeologists have not yet located the Mitanni capital of Wassukkani, although it is likely that the city is located near the headwaters of the Khabur River. Mitanni collapsed in the late fourteenth century BC, conquered first by the resurgent Hittites and then by Assyria.

## HEIGHT OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE

The Old Kingdom of the Hittites, one of whose earliest kings was Hattusilis, lasted from c. 1650–1400 BC, but in fact much of this period was spent in a long decline after its pinnacle in 1595, when Hattusilis's grandson Mursilis I led an extraordinary 500-mile campaign to Babylon, which he briefly controlled. The Hittite kings, however, eventually found a second wind. During the New Kingdom (c. 1400–1200 BC), the Hittite Empire expanded far beyond the boundaries of the Old Kingdom, reaching its apex under King Suppiluliumas I (r. c. 1380 to c. 1346 BC). His armies put an end to the faltering Mitanni kingdom, sacking Wassukkani and seizing their vassal cities, then advanced to Kadesh, Damascus, and Carchemish. Cowed into submission, Nuhasi, Amurru, Aleppo, and Kizzuwadna fell into Hittite hands. Until the abrupt decline of the Hittites after 1200 BC, the empire would compete and trade with Egypt and Assyria.

*Below: This map shows the Near East at 1400 BC, illustrating the Kingdom of Mitanni at its height.*





# BATTLE OF KADESH

In c. 1274 BC, the armies of two of the mightiest empires then in existence met each other at Kadesh, an ancient city located in what is now Syria. The Hittites and Egyptians had been battling each other for control of the Levant for many years: by the start of Ramesses II's rise to power in Egypt (c. 1279), the region of Amurru—traditionally in the Egyptian sphere of influence—had been lost to the Hittites for some sixty years. Ramesses II assembled his army into four divisions, called Amun, Re, Ptah, and Sutekh, numbering about 20,000 men altogether, and marched north to reclaim Egypt's lost territory.



A Hungarian stamp depicting the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

## THE BATTLE OF KADESH

Facing Ramesses II was the massive Hittite army led by Muwatallish. While the Egyptians favored composite bows and short swords called khopeshes, the Hittites preferred armored chariots—each containing two or three men—and infantry, attired in some kind of long mail shirt and bearing the typically short, sometimes curved Hittite sword.

A little more than half of Muwatallish's forces—which numbered perhaps 18,000 or 19,000 men—rode to Kadesh in chariots, which the Hittites used to smash enemy armies before sending the infantry to clean up. Yet Muwatallish did not rely solely on weaponry to win the day. When Ramesses II reached the Orontes River, his men discovered two Hittite deserters who reported that an alarmed Muwatallish had already retreated. Ramesses immediately crossed the river with his Amun division, with the Re division following behind, in a bid to reach Kadesh and seize the highly defensible city.

Ramesses had been duped. Instead of an abandoned path to Kadesh he found the entire Hittite army. The pharaoh sent out a desperate summons, but it had taken all day just to cross the river with a single division, and aid would be slow in coming. The next morning, Hittite chariots smashed into the Re division, hurrying toward their pharaoh, and chased it all the way into the Amun camp. The scattered Re soldiers created panic and confusion among their own comrades, and the Hittites took the opportunity to surround the pharaoh on all sides.

The Hittite chariots charged. It seemed nothing could prevent an outright slaughter—but the Hittites stopped to loot the fallen. When a small contingent of Egyptian troops appeared (perhaps from Amurru), Ramesses mustered his men and led them through the weakest point of the Hittite circle, where it lay against the river. Many Hittites, forced into the water, drowned; with the Ptah division finally approaching from the south, the Egyptians rapidly defeated the remaining Hittites.

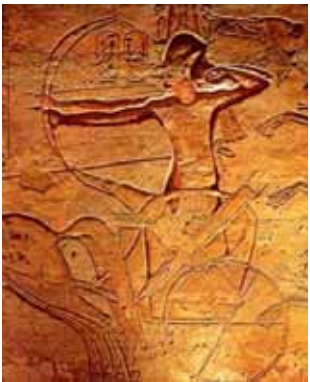
## THE AFTERMATH

Tactically, Egypt had won the day. The lasting victors, however, would be the Hittites, who allowed Ramesses to retreat but took control not only of Kadesh and Amurru but much of the rest of the Levant as well. Egypt would never recover its power in this crucial region; although Egypt remained a mighty empire for several more centuries, she would slowly lose power and influence and would eventually crumble under successive waves of invaders.



Above: A colossal statue of Pharaoh Ramesses II in Memphis, Egypt.

Below: The map shows the extent of Egypt after the Kadesh treaty.



Above: An armored Hittite charioteer fighting in the Battle of Kadesh.

Below: Trattoto di Kadesh, the Kadesh peace agreement, believed to be the oldest such treaty in the world.





# KING DAVID AND ISRAEL

The greater part of historical information about the Israeli settlement in Canaan and their establishment of kingdoms there comes from the Hebrew Bible. Written perhaps centuries after the events it describes, the Bible provides a sacred history, but not necessarily—from the scholar's standpoint—a factual one. Nevertheless, if the historian must subject the Bible's details to strict scrutiny, the broad outlines of the settlement and wars that followed are plausible and to some extent can be confirmed by reference to external and archaeological sources.



Above: *This miniature from the 15th-century Jruchi Gospels depicts King Solomon being presented with gifts.*

## FROM SAUL TO SOLOMON

The Israelite tribes arrived in Canaan from about the late thirteenth century BC and proceeded to carve territories for themselves out of the arid central highlands, competing with the ensconced Canaanites and Philistines but also with each other. According to the Hebrew Bible, it was not until the Philistines attacked Aphek (whose location remains debated) and captured the Ark of the Covenant, the most holy Hebrew artifact, that the Israelites began to unify against these external threats. Around 1031 BC, an army from Ammon, east of the Dead Sea, besieged Jabesh-gilead, a city about twenty miles south of the Sea of Galilee. Saul, a young warrior of Gibeah, stepped up to meet this threat, collecting an army and smashing the Ammonites. Shortly afterward he became the first king of a unified Israel, but he was unable to drive the Canaanites or Philistines from the salients they had made into Israelite territory or reach the coast.

Among Saul's young retainers was a Judahite (one of the Israeli tribes) from Bethlehem named David. Several conflicting stories, likely all folk legends, are presented to explain David's presence at court and his subsequent slaying of the Philistine "giant" Goliath and marriage to Saul's daughter, Michal. However (in a pattern familiar to students of folk narrative), David faces growing jealousy and eventually persecution from Saul and flees to the wild Philistine coast. There he attracts a band of Israeli refugees, displaced by wars. Meanwhile, Saul's disappointing military career ends in a battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa, and with his death the unity of Israel began to slip away.

From his capital at Mahanaim, tentatively located near the Jordan River, Saul's son Ishbaal retained his hold over most of the northern tribes, while David made a triumphant return to the south, where he was crowned king and set up a capital at Hebron. A civil war followed, but David emerged triumphant—he reestablished Israeli unity by resuming his marriage with Michal and establishing a new capital at Jerusalem (after capturing it from a hostile people called the Jebusites). At that point the ever-simmering war with the Philistines flared again, but David, apparently a more able commander than his predecessor, successfully forced them back to the coast. Afterward he embarked on a series of campaigns, reducing Aram-Damascus, Ammon, Moab, and Edom to vassalage—although the extent of his actual control in these places remains unclear.

In Hebrew tradition, David is recognized as a kind of folk hero or model king, responsible for Israel's first golden age, but it was his successor, the famously wise King Solomon, who broadened Israel's borders to their widest extent, claiming territory as far north as the Euphrates. Solomon tried to further reduce the fractious tribalism of the Hebrew people by dividing his country into administrative principalities that ignored traditional tribal boundaries, but immediately after his death his kingdom broke apart. The resulting contention between the competing successor states, Israel and Judah, made them both vulnerable to external aggressors—particularly great ancient empires like Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia.



Above: *Gilboa Ridge was the site of Saul's defeat by the Philistines at the Battle of Gilboa. Saul committed suicide to avoid being taken captive.*

Right: *David is shown here having decapitated the slain Philistine "giant," Goliath. David had killed Goliath with a stone hurled from his sling, then used Goliath's sword to cut off his head.*





# ISRAEL AND BABYLON

During the seventh and sixth centuries BC, the lands of Palestine and the Levant, including the Jewish kingdoms of Israel and Judah, lie trapped between mighty civilizations, primarily Egypt, Assyria, and (later) Babylon. Since 738 BC, Israel and Judah had been unwilling Assyrian vassals; in 722 the Assyrians destroyed Samaria, Israel's capital, leaving Judah the only Jewish kingdom. The people of Judah suffered under Assyrian rule until around 612 to 609 BC, when the Medes and Chaldeans of Babylon conquered Nineveh. King Josiah of Judah seized the opportunity to restore some independence (and territory) to his kingdom, but Egypt too had sensed blood in the water and Josiah fell to Pharaoh Necho in 609 BC: Judah now belonged to Egypt.

Immediately, the triumphant Babylonians, led by the greatest king of the Neo-Babylonian or Chaldean Empire, Nebuchadnezzar II (r. c. 605–c. 561 BC), began fighting the Egyptians. A decisive victory at Carchemish in 605 ensured Babylonian hegemony in the Middle East—by 603 Nebuchadnezzar had tossed the Egyptians out of Judah. The Judeans were divided: some advocated rebellion against Babylon, seeking Egyptian protection; others advocated patience with Babylon; still others wanted rebellion against everybody with a goal of complete independence.



## THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

In 601 BC, Judean King Jehoiakim sided with the pro-Egyptian crowd and rebelled. The result was disastrous. In 598 Nebuchadnezzar marched into Judah; Jehoiakim died, possibly in battle. In 597, following a long siege, Jehoiakim's successor surrendered Jerusalem. The defeated king and 10,000 able-bodied male Jews were forced to return to Babylon with Nebuchadnezzar, who placed the king's uncle Zedekiah on Judah's throne. Thus began the Babylonian Exile of the Jews. But the pro-Egyptian faction was not to be silenced, and Zedekiah twice rebelled. The second time, in 588, Nebuchadnezzar responded without pity.

After defeating Judah's Egyptian ally, Hophra, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Beth-shemesh, Beesheba, Azekah, and Lacish, and once again besieged Jerusalem. When he won the city in 586 (possibly 587), he ravaged it. Many date the Babylonian Exile to the destruction of Jerusalem, owing to the deportation of nearly all of its inhabitants to Babylon; devastatingly, Nebuchadnezzar burned the great Temple, the center of Jewish religious life since King Solomon in the tenth century BC.



Judah had been utterly destroyed. The Jews would not control a territory of their own until the Maccabean Revolt of the second century BC, although some of them would return to Jerusalem, and build the Second Temple, after Cyrus the Great of Persia conquered Babylonia in 539–538 BC. The Babylonian Exile had enormous effects on Judaism: synagogues, Zionism, and the concept of a Jewish Diaspora all date to this period.

Above: *In 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonians conquered Judah and Jerusalem, and laid waste to Solomon's Temple.*  
Left: *The ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's palace, known as the "Door of God."*



# MACCABEES AND ROMANS

After the death of Alexander the Great, the Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt and the Seleucid Empire fought a tug-of-war over the Levant, with the Seleucids eventually prevailing (see page 142). Increased exposure to these Hellenized states precipitated many cultural changes in Judea (formerly Judah), the remaining Jewish kingdom. Some Jews welcomed Hellenic culture; many moved (in a peaceful episode of the Diaspora) to Alexandria and other major cities of Hellenic Egypt. Others resented not only the lack of autonomy but also the influx of foreign culture. Leadership roles in Judea, particularly and most problematically that of the high priest, became increasingly politicized. Brief Jewish unity was achieved during the reign of Antiochus IV of the Seleucid dynasty (175–164 BC), who attempted to stamp out Judaism by force in an effort to homogenize his realm.

Right: *Bust of Antiochus IV, the son of King Antiochus the Great and ruler of the Seleucid Empire from 175 BC until his death in 164 BC. Antiochus is best remembered for the two wars he waged against Egypt, and most reviled for his persecution of Jews.*



## HASMONEANS AND ROMANS

Simon, the first king of an independent Jewish kingdom since the Babylonian Exile, became the first monarch of the Hasmonean dynasty. Despite ongoing internal dissension, the Hasmonians continued a war of expansion (actually begun by Jonathan) that by 76 BC had pushed their borders from Rhinocurra to Iturea and east to the borders of Nabataea.

The divisions between the Sadducees—the wealthy, conservative priestly class—and the Pharisees—a religious party who differed from the Sadducees on certain cultic practices—erupted into civil war in 67 BC. The disruption drew in neighboring Nabataea and attracted the attention of a Roman general hungry for conquest: Pompey the Great. By supporting one of the contenders for high priest in Jerusalem, Pompey (fresh from victories in Pontus and Damascus) was able to extend Rome's control over the eastern Mediterranean at the expense of the Seleucids. With Pompey's successful siege of Jerusalem in 63 BC, Jewish independence vanished again, this time under the heel of Rome.



Above: *Judas Maccabeus led the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire; he is acclaimed as one of the greatest warriors in Jewish history.*

Above right: *Coins issued by Mattathias Antigonus, the last king of the Maccabee family, in 40–37 BC.*

Right: *A replica of the Menorah from the Temple of Jerusalem.*

## THE MACCABEAN REVOLT

Antiochus's brutal measures, which included defiling the Jewish Temple and massacring those who refused to worship the Greek gods, drove one priest, Mattathias, to open rebellion. After fleeing into the mountains, Mattathias was joined by his sons as well as others determined to end the Seleucid terror. Mattathias died in 166 BC, but his son Judas, afterward called Maccabee ("Hammer" or "Extinguisher"), led the rebellion thereafter. In 164, the year of Antiochus's death, Judas captured Jerusalem (save the Acra) and reconsecrated the Temple, an act commemorated by Hanukkah. For the most part Judas was forced to fight a guerilla war, but he did this with great élan, winning several victories before his death in 160 BC. Another of Mattathias's sons, Jonathan now led the rebellion—so successfully that the Seleucids sued for peace and named Jonathan the governor of Judea.

In 150 BC, however, Jonathan (supported by the Seleucid king) declared himself high priest, a position that conservative Jews believed he could not hold (for reasons of descent). Thus the factions that would divide the Jewish populace well into the first millennium—principally the Sadducees and the Pharisees—reemerged. In 143 BC, Jonathan was assassinated by a contender for the Seleucid crown, who deposed the former king in 142 BC; the deposed king, thanking Mattathias's third son, Simon, for his support, granted Judea independence.





# JEWISH REVOLTS

During the first and early second centuries AD, Rome gradually brought the Jewish states occupying the eastern shore of the Mediterranean under direct control. As they established themselves in the region, the Romans—like the Seleucids before them—attempted to impose Hellenic culture there, sometimes passing laws seemingly designed to provoke the Jews (such as banning male circumcision, a traditional Jewish practice of great religious significance). Years of discontent and friction between the Hellenic and Jewish populations culminated in the massacre of some 20,000 Jews (according to the first-century Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus) in Caesarea Maritima in AD 66.



*Expulsion of the Jews by Hadrian, AD 135.*



*Left: According to Josephus, in his book, *The War of the Jews*, Titus had ordered that the Temple should not be destroyed, but a soldier threw a torch into one of the Temple windows, setting the building ablaze.*



*Above: A panel from the Arch of Titus, celebrating Titus' siege of Jerusalem. The panel, called "The Spoils of War," depicts a triumphal procession of Romans, carrying the treasures of the Jewish Temple, including the Temple Menorah and the trumpets of Jericho.*

## THE GREAT REVOLT

Previous small revolts had been met with increased Roman severity, yet the Jewish population disregarded this history in the face of the massacre and rose in the Great Revolt (also called the First Jewish Revolt). Initially they enjoyed some success, retaking Jerusalem and destroying a legion in the Battle of Beth-Horon in the first year of the war. Roman administrators fled; briefly, the rebels controlled the whole country.

Unwilling to relinquish Palestine, Rome sent a 60,000-man army under General Vespasian. He subdued Galilee (whose defenses were organized by Josephus, the historian-turned-commander) by AD 68, taking the towns of Yodfat, Gamla, and finally the fortress of Jotapata after a forty seven-day siege. The greater success, however, belonged to Titus, Vespasian's son. In AD 70, he besieged Jerusalem for 134 days. After the city fell Titus destroyed the holy Temple, an event of momentous tragedy to the Jewish faith.

called the Kitos War after the Roman general, Lusius Quietus, who operated in Judea.

Confusingly, the conflict of AD 132–36 is called the Second Revolt, the Third Revolt, or the Bar Kokhba Revolt after its primary Jewish leader, who was recognized by some Jews at the time as the Messiah. Unlike previous uprisings, which had been spontaneous and more or less confined to specific localities, the Bar Kokhba Revolt benefited from organization and planning well before the first salvo. Precipitating the revolt was Emperor Hadrian's intention to forcibly Hellenize the region: among other offenses, he had built a pagan temple on the ruins of the holy Jewish Temple and banned circumcision.

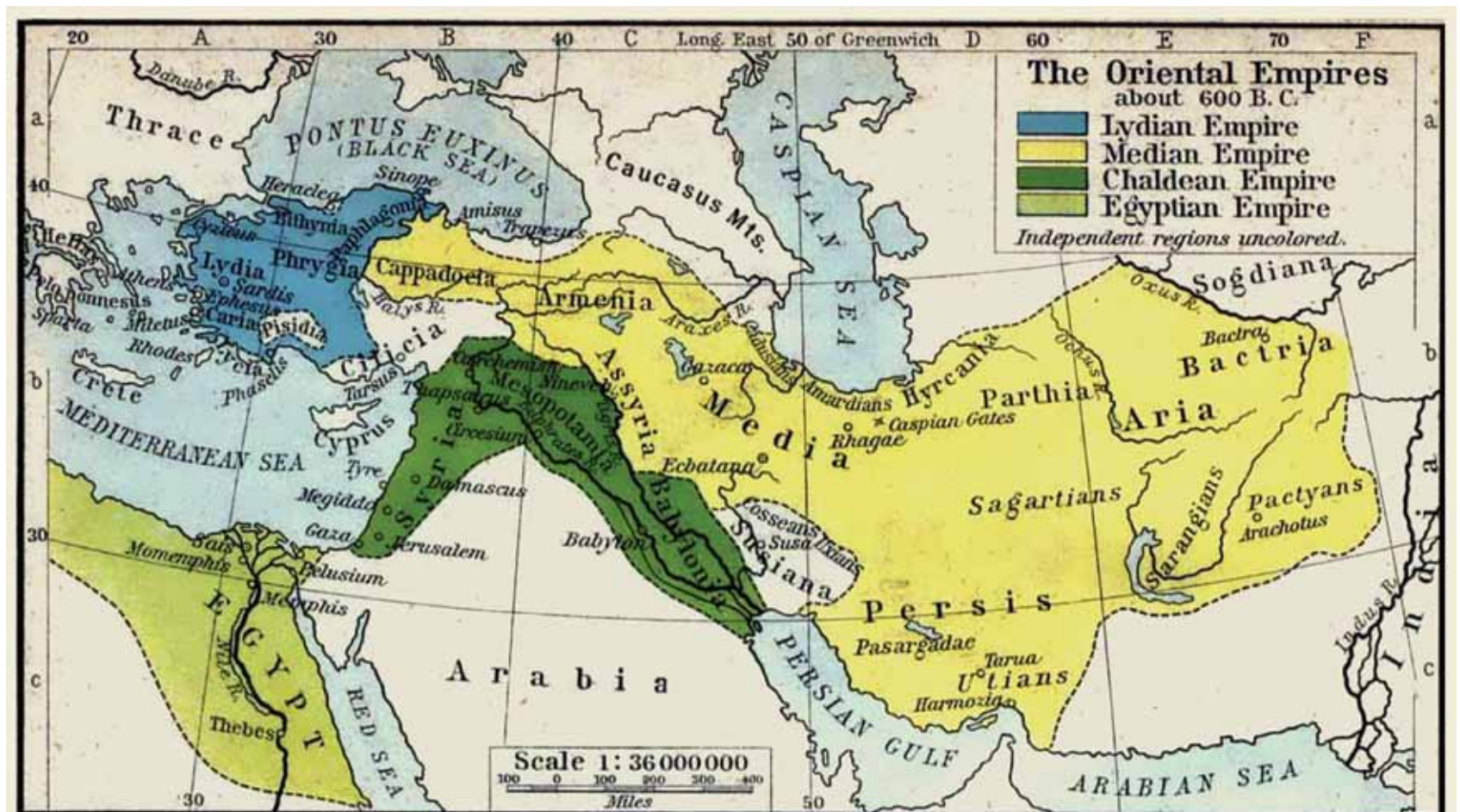
After Hadrian left for other parts of the Empire, Bar Kokhba struck. In 132, the Jews took Jerusalem, Herodion, and Bethar, and for three years claimed control over an independent Israel. This initial success was reversed after Rome sent a large army. Guerilla warfare caused heavy losses on both sides, but eventually the Romans regained Jerusalem and finally crushed the bulk of the rebellion in 135 at the fortress of Betar, where Bar Kokhba himself died. More than half a million Jews died, the province was renamed "Palaestina," and Jews were banned from Jerusalem.



# CYRUS THE GREAT

Sometime in the second decade of the sixth century BC, a king was born in Persis, then a province of the large but little known Median Empire. The second and last of the ruling dynasty to be called Cyrus, he is sometimes referred to as Cyrus II but is famous as Cyrus the Great.

In 550 Cyrus rebelled against Astyages, the Median king and his overlord (and, according to later legends, his grandfather). It was the first step in building the first Persian empire, called Achaemenid after the dynasty's shadowy ancestor, Achaemenes. The Medians controlled—nominally, at any rate—lands from Anatolia to the upper Indus, but it was Cyrus who truly consolidated this vast empire and in a series of conquests expanded it ever farther.



Above: A map showing the four Oriental empires as they stood in 600 BC.

## Cyrus's Army

Possibly learning from the Lydians, Cyrus created what some military historians consider the first true cavalry, fielding units of mounted warriors not as supplements to chariots but as their own force. It would not be long before chariots disappeared from the battlefield altogether (except in Britain, where they lasted another 750 years). Cyrus encouraged military innovation: during his invasion of Babylonia, his engineers managed to divert the course of the entire Euphrates, and he created a system of roads that served both armies and merchants well. His personal bodyguard, said to number 10,000 men, were called the "Immortals" because as soon as one died another would take his place, creating the impression of invincibility both within and outside the unit.

## CONQUERING CAMELS

Cyrus's first campaign after defeating Astyages took him to Lydia, a kingdom in western Anatolia. First neutralizing Cilicia, in 547 BC Cyrus met King Croesus of Lydia in battle on the Halys River. The second, decisive battle followed shortly afterwards at the Lydian capital of Sardis. Cyrus besieged the city but, according to later authors, worried about the strength of the enemy cavalry. In what may be an apocryphal tale, Cyrus unhorsed the entire Lydian cavalry by sending in the camels he used as pack beasts; the horses panicked at the scent. Sardis fell in 546, leaving Cyrus in control of Anatolia.

## THE FIRST PERSIAN EMPIRE

While campaigning against Lydia, Cyrus had made peaceful overtures to the Neo-Babylonian Empire ruled by Nabonidus, a Chaldean and successor to the great King Nebuchadnezzar II. However, in 539 BC, Cyrus invaded. Nabonidus met him on the field at Opis, a city probably on the Tigris where Nebuchadnezzar had built a massive dam as part of Babylon's already impressive defenses. No details of the Battle of Opis survive, but the Babylonians suffered a devastating defeat; one of the casualties was Nabonidus's own son. After that, Babylonia fell easily into Cyrus's hands, in part because Nabonidus was universally disliked by his subjects. In particular, the Jews, who had been forced into exile in Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, welcomed Cyrus as their deliverer.

Cyrus died on campaign in the east, struggling to bring the fractious peoples there in line. According to the Greek historian Herodotus, it was the female leader of a tribe called the Massagetai who killed him, somewhere in the Transoxania.

Cyrus left behind an astonishing legacy. Not only was the size of his empire impressive, Cyrus combined the rare skills of diplomacy and military genius. He treated those he conquered well, respected local traditions, and knit together several cultures to form a truly united empire—one that lasted for two and a half centuries.



Above: According to Herodotus, the Greek historian, Cyrus met his death in a fierce battle with the Massagetae tribe. His remains were interred in a limestone tomb in his capital city, Pasargadae.



# DARIUS THE GREAT

The Achaemenid Empire reached its apex under Darius the Great, who ruled 522–486 BC, not only in terms of conquest and territory but also in the areas of administration, art, and architecture. Nearly all of ancient Persia's most famous ruins and artifacts date to the reign of Darius, a brilliant governor as well as general, called in his own words the “King of Kings.”



Above: *This Persian rock relief shows a scene from the coronation of Ardashir I, the first king of the Sassanid Empire of what is now Iran. Ardashir is given the ribboned diadem, the sign of kingship, from the spirit of Darius the Great.*

## THE SIGN AT SUNRISE

Darius, son of a provincial governor, came to the throne by violent means. When the true heir, Cambyses II, died in 522 BC Darius raced from Egypt to Media and killed the man who was next in line, on the pretext that he was a pretender. If Herodotus can be trusted, Darius's groom then arranged Darius's horse to neigh at sunrise, which was taken as a sign that Darius should be king.

Divine omen or no, the subjected peoples of the Achaemenid Empire seized upon the imperial succession crisis to revolt. Darius spent the first year or two of his reign crushing revolutions, sometimes more than once: Babylon, which proved particularly fractious, suffered three revolts and sieges in a row. Nevertheless, Darius lost neither his appetite nor desire for battle, and after establishing his dominance in the empire proper he set about expanding its borders.

Below: *The “Immortals” was the name that the Greek historian Herodotus gave to the elite group of soldiers who fought for the Achaemenid Empire. They served as both the Imperial guard, and as the Persian Empire's standing army.*

## THE CONQUESTS OF DARIUS

By delegating certain campaigns to his generals, Darius was able to expand his empire in several directions nearly simultaneously. In an early campaign to the north he overthrew the Saka; shortly afterward, in the west, he took Cyrenaica, Thrace, and Samos from 519–513 BC and had limited success with Macedon and Athens. A campaign in 513 or 515 BC against the Scythians, crossing the Danube, failed, but by 518 BC Darius had pushed as far as the Indus River in the southeast. In Egypt he was recognized as pharaoh, following the subjugation of that country by Camyses II in 525 BC; in the Mediterranean, even after the Greek cities of Anatolia revolted and Darius's famous defeat at Marathon (490 BC; see page 49), he held Anatolia, Thrace, and added the Aegean islands to his realm.

Darius was a great builder as well as a conqueror, and through all of his campaigning he nevertheless found time to organize his empire into twenty satrapies (provinces), build roads, standardize coinage and weights, restore or complete a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, and erect some of ancient Persia's most impressive buildings at Susa (which he took for his capital) and Persepolis, whose ruins are now a World Heritage Site.





# THE ROYAL ROAD

For the creation and maintenance of large, ancient empires, perhaps no single innovation mattered so much as the imperial road. The first significant example of such a road system comes from Persia, where Darius expanded and improved existing road systems—portions of which may have built by the Assyrians—until the celebrated Royal Road ran from Sardis to Susa, the capital. A relay system of couriers carried messages across the vast span of the Persian Empire, which unlike other empires (such as those of Greece or Egypt), had no rivers or seas convenient for transportation or communication. “Nothing mortal,” the Greek historian Herodotus says admiringly, “accomplishes a journey with more speed than these messengers” (Histories VIII.98). Although citizens were permitted to use the road, thus encouraging trade and cultural homogeneity, the road served as a vital artery for imperial communications and troops, which before the industrial age had to travel by foot or horse. Troop speed—and subsequently an emperor’s ability to quell rebellions or conquer new territories—was improved dramatically by the Royal Road.



Main Image: *Darius’s construction of the Royal Road was of such quality that the road continued to be used until Roman times. In Diyarbakir, Turkey a bridge still stands from this period of the road’s use. The road also helped Persia increase long-distance trade, which reached its zenith during the time of Alexander the Great.*

Above: *Darius the Great rebuilt the Royal road (it was previously an ancient highway) to facilitate rapid communication throughout his very large empire from Susa to Sardis, which took ninety days on foot. Mounted couriers could travel the same 1,677 miles in seven days. The Greek historian Herodotus wrote, “There is nothing in the world that travels faster than these Persian couriers.” Herodotus’s praise for these messengers—“Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor darkness of night prevents these couriers from completing their designated stages with utmost speed”—was inscribed on the James Farley Post Office in New York and is sometimes thought of as the United States Postal Service creed.*

## South American Roads

Independent of the Persians, the Romans, and the Chinese—who were building major roads as early as the reign of the first emperor in the third century bc—the Incas of South America developed an astonishing system of roads wending through the peaks of the Andes mountains. As did the European and Middle Eastern road builders, the Incas placed way stops, one day’s travel apart, along the road. Not only did the road permit Incan troops to establish and control the extent of the vast empire, it came to represent the empire’s power.

Other pre-Columbian American road systems, although none so extensive as the Incan example, existed in the Mayan and Aztec Empires as well. Like the Romans, the Aztecs may have designed the width of their roads based on the width of a given number of infantry columns marching abreast (in the Aztec’s case, this was probably two columns normally, or four on larger roads).



Above: *The Incas started building the Machu Picchu “estate” around 1400, but abandoned it as an official site for the Inca rulers a century later at the time of the Spanish Conquest. Although known locally, it was unknown to the outside world before being brought to international attention in 1911 by the American historian Hiram Bingham. Since then, Machu Picchu has become an important tourist attraction. Most of the outlying buildings have been reconstructed in order to give tourists a better idea of what the structures originally looked like.*



## THE ROMAN ROADS

Probably no ancient system of roads is more famous than that of the Romans, whose engineering and planning skills are evident in that the ruins of some of their roads may still be seen, while several modern roads still follow these ancient tracks. A few Roman roads are even in use today. In the later Roman Empire, roads were often convenient places to draw borders between neighboring polities.

The Romans were the first people to make concrete and the first to use it in constructing roads, a process undertaken by those who would make the most significant use out of it: the army. Smooth, straight, paved roads allowed rapid travel for centuries after the empire's decline and dissolution; a better land-based transportation system in Europe would not develop until the advent of automobiles. Army movement across vast distances remained a problem in the less-populated sections of Eastern Europe well into the twentieth century—and by then trains and airplanes were beginning to supplement cars and trucks for troops as well as civilians. The Romans and Persians also solved another problem afflicting armies, even today: by establishing way stops at regular intervals along the road, imperial messengers and troops could easily prepare for journeys, plan scheduled movements, and find aid and sustenance.



*Roman Road Terminus, Morocco.*





# ALEXANDER THE GREAT

In any list of the world's most skilled generals, Alexander the Great must rank at or near the top. He ascended to the throne of Macedon in 336 BC at age twenty, and by the time he died in 323 BC he had conquered Palestine, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Persia. Brilliant, ruthless, and endlessly ambitious, Alexander's conquests brought Hellenic culture as far as India and Central Asia—probably his most lasting legacy, as his empire foundered immediately after his death.

## Philip of Macedon

By rights, the first episode in the legendary history of Alexander belongs to his father, Philip II of Macedonia, also known as Philip of Macedon. Philip ascended to the Macedonian throne in 359 BC, when the kingdom was riven by internal divisions, ambitious princes, interference from Athens and Thebes, and invading forces from Illyria and Paeonia. It was Philip who united the Macedonians, molded them into the best army ever seen in the Mediterranean world, and brought all of Greece—partly through conquest, partly through diplomacy—into the Macedonian sphere of influence. His strategic vision and patience matched his son's tactical brilliance and impetuosity; it was Philip who planned an invasion of Asia (i.e., Anatolia), which would open the door to Hellenic expansion into Persian territory proper. Among the military innovations that served his son so well were the introduction of the “companion cavalry,” the integration of specialized forces like the cavalry, hypaspists (shock troops), and a reimagined phalanx, which sacrificed defense for offensive power by, for example, substituting a 14-foot-long spear for the 8-foot Greek variety. Philip too had a gift for tactics: at the Battle of Chaeroneia (338 BC), which cemented his military mastery of Greece, he faced a line of Greeks: Athenians on Philip's right, allies in the center, and Thebans on the left. Feigning a withdrawal, Philip drew the Athenians and their allies out of line, opening a gap through which the cavalry—led by the eighteen-year-old Alexander—rushed, circling the Thebans. The Athenians panicked; the Thebans were destroyed.

Above: *As this bust of Alexander shows, he was clean-shaven, and would have stood out from his hirsute Macedonian generals.*  
Above right: *A relief depicting the Battle of Gaugamela, in which Alexander defeated Darius III of Persia.*  
Right: *Portrait of Alexander in full armor, by Rembrandt.*

## A LEADER ARISES

The Greek cities of Asia Minor (Anatolia) had long chafed under Persian rule, and Alexander, after securing Thessaly, Thrace, and Macedonia against Illyrian and Getae incursions, turned swiftly to the first stage in his long eastward march.

During his first major confrontation with the Persian army at the Battle of Granicus (334), Alexander displayed several attributes that would play a large role in his successes: almost suicidal bravery; brilliant, focused use of cavalry charges; and an adaptable, instinctive grasp of tactics. At Granicus, the opposing armies faced off across the river. Alexander feinted left, the Persians sent reinforcements to the wrong point, and Alexander himself led a cavalry charge straight across the river. The Persians

suffered 10,000 casualties: Alexander lost fewer than 200 men.

In battle after battle Alexander displayed his military acumen. With an army of some 35,000 (including 5,000 cavalry), he swept through Asia Minor, encountering severe resistance at Halicarnassus (334) and Issus (333). Halicarnassus was Alexander's first major siege and his first victory over an “impregnable” city: he would repeat this feat during his conquest of Levant at Tyre (332) and Gaza (332). Egypt went quietly and the Egyptians, freed of Persia, welcomed him as pharaoh; famously, Alexander traveled to the Siwa Oasis and received a prophecy he revealed to no one.



## BESIEGED IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Alexander's sieges at Halicarnassus, Tyre, and Gaza display his overall strategy: rather than rushing headlong to face the Persian Empire, he first chipped away at their western regions, some of which—most notably Egypt—were all too willing to abandon Persian mastery. Additionally, the Persian navy remained a formidable presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, but securing the coast and seizing the major ports would neuter this threat, which potentially could threaten Greece. Greece itself was none too secure in Alexander's grasp to begin with, having only recently come under Macedonia's yoke: establishing control over Anatolia, the Levant, and Egypt would hem Greece in as much as it would protect it, humble it with a grand show of force, and enrich its merchants by increased opportunities for trade.

Halicarnassus (which had only recently, in about 350 BC, completed one of the Wonders of the Ancient World, the Tomb of Mausolus), Tyre, and Gaza each presented different challenges to Alexander, who suffered from the outset from his lack of a navy—allowing the Persians to supply their forces by sea, until defector captains switched sides at Tyre. Halicarnassus maintained not one but three fortresses; Tyre stood on an island half a mile from shore; and Gaza stood on such a high hill that Alexander's engineers assured him it could not be taken. In each case, Alexander displayed characteristic stubbornness, adaptability, and strategic sense. He only managed to take one of Halicarnassus's three fortresses, but bottled up the other two to neuter the city as a threat; at Gaza he employed sappers to destroy the walls from the inside, rather than use the enormous siege towers he had unleashed at Tyre. Tyre fell the hardest, after a brutal seven-month siege, and Alexander was ruthless in victory. Eighty thousand Tyrians are said to have died, with another 30,000 surviving as slaves: the only ones unscathed, thanks to Alexander's vaunted piety, were those who had taken refuge in the temple.







### THE MARCH TO THE HYPHASIS

In July 331, Alexander crossed the Euphrates into Mesopotamia. The Persian emperor, Darius III, gave battle at Gaugamela on October 31, fielding 200,000 troops to Alexander's 40,000. Nevertheless, Darius lost badly and fled into Media. Persia now lay virtually defenseless: Babylon came willingly, Susa fell after a brief siege, and by January of 330, after a fierce battle at the Persian Gates, Alexander had looted Persepolis and Pasargadae, where he visited the ravaged tomb of Cyrus the Great.

In the spring of 330, Alexander advanced to Ecbatana, capital of Media, and threaded his way through central Persia all the way to the Jaxartes River, where he defeated the Scythians and

founded one of many cities called Alexandria (the city in Egypt is only the most famous).

Alexander now controlled the entire Persian Empire and beyond, but he pushed onward into India, winning yet another unassailable fortress in the siege of Aornos. It is difficult to say just how far he would have conquered had not his army, exhausted and suspicious of their commander's increasing adoption of Persian culture, mutinied at the Hyphasis River. It was the end of Alexander's conquests and virtually the end of him: he survived only a few more years before dying suddenly in Babylon at the age of thirty-three.

Above: *By the time Alexander reached the age of 30, his empire stretched from the Himalayas to the Ionian Sea—one of the largest empires of the ancient world.*



Left: *The Battle of Issus was the second great battle for primacy in Asia. The young Alexander of Macedon led the invading Macedonian troops into battle with the army led by Darius III of Achaemenid, Persia. The battle took place in the ancient town of Issus, in present-day Turkey. Accounts of the size of the two armies vary, but it is generally agreed that the victorious Macedonian army numbered around 40,000, and defeated an army at least twice as large. Alexander's victory marked the beginning of the end of the Persian Empire.*



# WARS OF THE DIADOCHI

Alexander's unexpected early death placed his recently conquered empire at the mercy of his squabbling generals. His heirs were few: Alexander left a half brother, Philip Arrhidaeus, the mentally challenged, epileptic bastard son of Philip II, and an as yet-to-be born child behind. With neither of these choices capable of taking command of the army, now milling about in the middle of Mesopotamia, the generals reluctantly agreed to recognize Perdiccas, commander of the companion cavalry, as regent of Arrhidaeus. If the unborn child proved to be a son, they would recognize him as king. Almost simultaneous revolts by several Greek cities (led by Athens) and Macedonian veterans in Bactria were put down: civil war seemed to have been averted.



Above: This coin depicts Cassander, King of Macedonia (305–297 BC). Cassander was the founder of the Antipatrid dynasty. After the Battle of Ipsus in 301 BC, he became the undisputed king of Macedonia; but it was a short reign—the unscrupulous king died of dropsy only four years later.



Above right: Ptolemy was a Greek astrologer, astronomer, mathematician and geographer who lived in Egypt under Roman rule. Little is known about his life, beyond the fact that he was a member of Alexander the Great's society.

## SHIFTING ALLIANCES

In fact, 323 BC was merely the calm before a storm of wars that would last for several decades and completely dissolve Alexander's empire (although Hellenic culture left lasting legacies in nearly every part of it). The wars of the Diadochi (the "successors") witnessed a conflicting, shifting web of alliances between Alexander's former generals, some of whom wanted to reunify the empire and others who wanted to carve out their own. In this period of aggressive warfare conducted by veteran generals, army size grew, the ubiquitous pike lengthened (from 14 to more than 20 feet), and decorum vanished entirely from the battlefield.

The first war broke out in 322 BC when the question of succession in Macedonia created an armed conflict and when Ptolemy, named satrap of Egypt by Perdiccas, stole Alexander's body for entombment in his own territory. Joining Ptolemy in rebellion were Antipater (regent of Macedonia) and his ally Craterus, Antigonus Monophthalmus (satrap of Phrygia, Pamphylia, and Lycia), and Lysimachus (governor of Thrace). Perdiccas rushed to Egypt, sending Eumenes—one of the few who remained loyal to the notion of a united empire—to defeat and kill Craterus in Anatolia. Perdiccas lost the Battle of Pelusium in 321, however, whereupon his soldiers revolted and his lieutenant Seleucus killed him.

With the end of the war, Antipater of Macedonia seized regency of the entire empire and rewarded Seleucus by naming him satrap of Babylonia (Seleucus's accomplices earned satrapies in Media and Elam), while Antigonus Monophthalmus ("one-eyed") added Lycaonia to his territory.



Left: This mosaic from Pella, in ancient Macedonia, shows Alexander in a lion hunt with his friend Craterus. The hunt took place at Sidon in 333 BC.



THE SECOND WAR

This state of affairs lasted barely two years, during which Antipater died, naming a loyal officer named Polyperchon over his own son, Cassander, as his successor. Predictably, Cassander revolted. Ptolemy, eager to establish full independence for Egypt, joined him. They found a third, less likely, ally in Antigonus, who simply wished to take Polyperchon's place. All three wanted Polyperchon and his charge, King Philip Arridaeus, removed. While Cassander took over Macedonia, Antigonus Monophthalmus faced off against Eumenes, who had been turned away by Seleucus at Babylon and retreated to Susa. Antigonus caught up at Gabae in 316 BC, defeated Eumenes, and killed him. Antigonus started throwing his weight around, convincing Seleucus to make a run for it. He found sanctuary with Ptolemy in Egypt.



Above: This coin of King Perdiccas III bears a profile of the Greek hero, Heracles (Hercules in Roman mythology).

THE THIRD WAR

Peace lasted for another two years, but when Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander formed an official coalition, Antigonus invaded Syria (held by Ptolemy). While he was busy besieging Tyre, Seleucus conquered Cyprus for Ptolemy. Antigonus now allied himself with his old enemy, Polyperchon, whose Peloponnesian holdings threatened Cassander, but while he and Ptolemy fought each other to a standstill in the Levant, Seleucus slipped away and regained control of Babylon in 312 BC. During 311, he reconquered Media and Elam and began a two-year, successful defense of his regained satrapy with Antigonus.

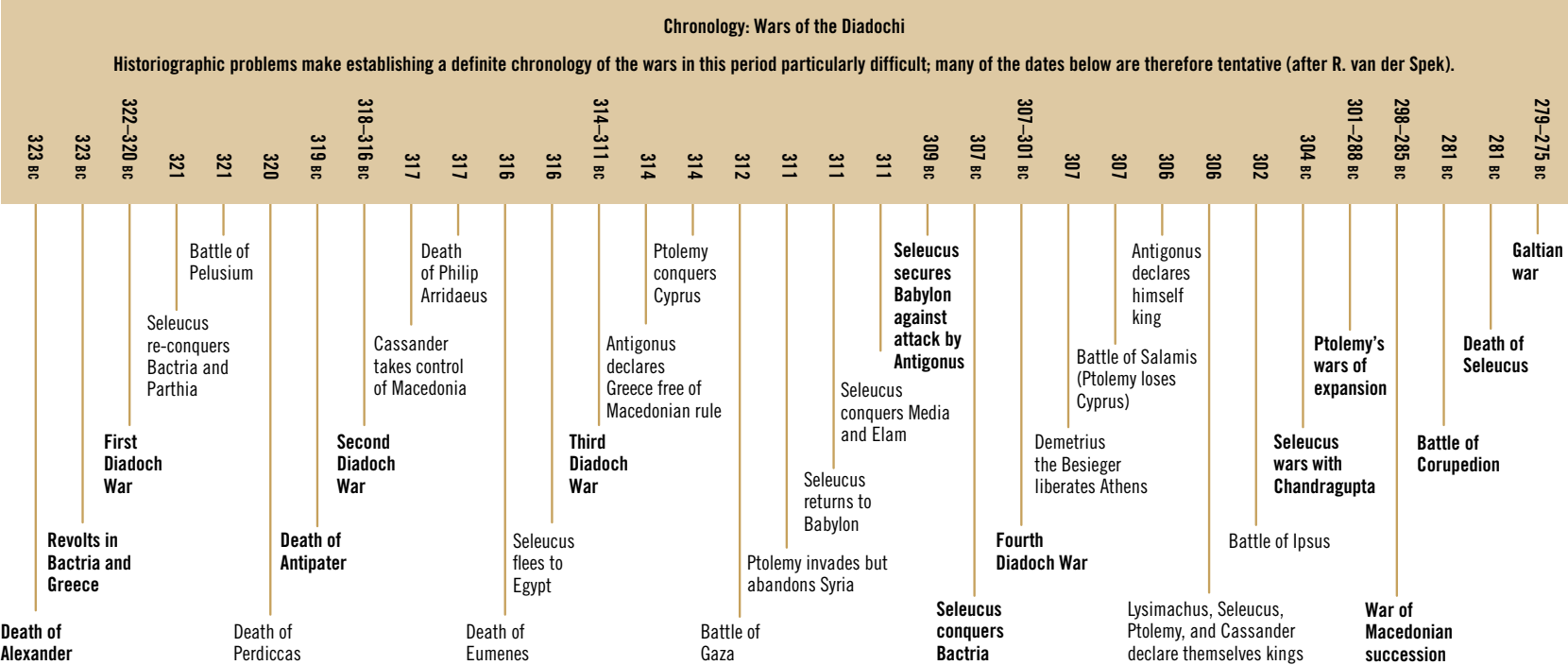


Above: War elephants were trained for combat. Their primary role was to charge at the enemy, trampling them and breaking the lines. Seleucus made great use of war elephants as he expanded the Seleucid empire.

THE FOURTH WAR

While Seleucus consolidated his eastern territories, the Fourth War of the Diadochi broke out in 307 BC when Demetrius, son of Antigonus, “liberated” Athens and stole Greece from Cassander. The following year he seized Cyprus, thus cutting both Cassander and Ptolemy off at the knees. Antigonus now declared himself king (Alexander’s heir), but this provoked the remaining Diadochi to assume royal titles for themselves. From 305 to 302, fighting concentrated in the Aegean Sea, but in 302 Lysimachus of Thrace invaded the Anatolian possessions of Antigonus. This bold move nearly ended in disaster, for Demetrius, coming from Greece, and Antigonus, arriving from the east, surrounded him. Cornered in Ipsus, Lysimachus was rescued by the armies of Seleucus.

The Battle of Ipsus was the decisive moment in the Wars of the Diadochi. The infantry of Antigonus and Demetrius outnumbered that of Seleucus and Lysimachus and the Anatolians fielded heavy cavalry while their opponents fielded light cavalry, but Seleucus had recently obtained five hundred war elephants from India, while Antigonus had only seventy-five. These allowed Seleucus to divide father and son, shattering their armies and their power. Although the Diadochi continued to scuffle over territory for another twenty years, the Battle of Ipsus closed the period of the Diadochi wars since it forever ended the hope of reconstituting Alexander’s empire.





# SELEUCIDS

Of the states that arose from the rapid rise and collapse of Alexander the Great's empire, the most successful were Ptolemy's Egypt and the Seleucid Empire. Ptolemy's descendants ruled Egypt for three hundred years; the Seleucid Empire encompassed territory from Anatolia into Central Asia and was by far the largest successor state to Alexander's ambitions. Although sprawling and wealthy, however, the Seleucid Empire only rarely enjoyed periods of stability, with enemies on virtually all sides. Eastern provinces like Bactria and Parthia broke away to form their own kingdoms; Seleucus himself had to cede territory to the triumphant Mauryan Empire in India; Greeks, Celts, Thracians, and Macedonians prevented expansion into Europe; and the empires of Ptolemy and Seleucus, although they had once been fellow officers and allies, fought several major wars over the Levant.

## Whence Parchment

During the reigns of the Attalid kings Pergamum transformed itself into a center of Hellenic culture. Among the fabulous ruins there today are theaters, temples, and a grand altar to Zeus, but in the ancient world Pergamum was most famous for its library, outshone only by the Great Library of Alexandria in Egypt. The Ptolemaic rulers of Alexandria were in fact so jealous of their library's superiority that they outlawed the export of papyrus, the Egyptian writing material. Undeterred, inventors in Pergamum learned to make a writing material out of animal skins. Called "pergamene" in Greek and "pergamenum" in Latin, today we know it as parchment. Bookmakers used parchment throughout the European Middle Ages until the process of papermaking overtook it in the late fourteenth century.

Above right and Below: *Pergamum (or Pergamon) was an Ancient Greek city in present-day Turkey. It was the capital of the Kingdom of Pergamon in 281–133 BC, during the Hellenistic period. In the background of these two illustrations can be seen the Great Altar of Pergamon.*



## THE RISE AND FALL OF PERGAMUM

Crushed between these "world powers" were smaller kingdoms; an examination of one of the most important of these, Pergamum, is an instructive example of the changing fortunes of the eastern Mediterranean in the last centuries before the first millennium AD and how the wars of the Diadochi unintentionally aided the rise of Rome.

Pergamum had been settled for centuries before Alexander the Great's conquering armies swept through the city. In 281 BC, Seleucus won his last major victory, defeating Lysimachus at the Battle of Corupedium. Most of Anatolia thus became part of the Seleucid Empire, but Seleucus was assassinated before he could follow through with his planned invasions of Thrace and Macedonia. Pergamum, in eastern Anatolia, became a vassal, but Seleucus's successors were busy elsewhere, and the Anatolians had to face invading Celts alone. Finally, under Eumenes I (r. 263–241 BC), Pergamum declared itself independent. The Attalid dynasty that controlled it thereafter is named for Eumenes's successor, Attalus I, the first Pergamum ruler to call himself king.

## A ROMAN RESCUE

In addition to the Seleucids, Pergamum had to deal with Macedonia, Alexander's homeland. At the turn of the second century BC, Philip V of Macedon and Antiochus III of the Seleucid Empire signed a colluding treaty with the aim of claiming Egyptian territory: while Antiochus invaded Syria and the Levant, Philip moved against Egyptian territories in the Aegean and Asia Minor. This aggression prompted Pergamum and Rhodes, another independent city-state, to appeal to Rome for help.

Rome, at the moment between wars with Carthage (see pages 20–21), was free to test her military might against a different enemy. The Second Macedonian War (200–196 BC) ended with a resounding Roman victory at the Battle of Cynoscephaleae in 197, allowing Rome to "free" Greece of Macedonian rule. Antiochus III, flush with victory in Syria, now moved himself to "free" Greece from Rome, sparking the Seleucid War (192–188 BC). The Greek Aetolian league had in fact invited Antiochus, hoping to recover lost territory of their own; Eumenes II of Pergamum and Rhodes jumped in against their old enemy.

Resounding Roman-Pergamum-Rhodian victories at Thermopylae, Corycus, Side, Myonessus, and Magnesia brought the Aetolians to their knees and pushed the Seleucids out of Anatolia; under Rome's aegis, Pergamum snatched up territory in Lydia, Phrygia, Lycaonia, and Pisidia. Rome's attention had now permanently been drawn into the eastern Mediterranean, with far-reaching consequences; Pergamum itself solidified Rome's interest in Anatolia when its last independent ruler, Attalus III, died without an heir in 133 and bequeathed the kingdom to Rome. As the center of the province of Asia, Pergamum became one of Rome's wealthiest and most important cities.



Above: *Ptolemy V Epiphanes was the fifth ruler of the Ptolemaic dynasty. After the death of his father, he became king at the age of five.*



# ALEXANDER AND HIS HEIRS

Ptolemy, who died in 283 BC, had followed the example of some of his most illustrious pharaonic ancestors by trying to extend Egypt's control into the Eastern Mediterranean and throughout the Levant. In the ancient world the region was a vital hub, economically prosperous and strategically valuable. As had the empires of Ancient Egypt, the Ptolemaic rulers had to contend for control with Mesopotamian- and Persian-based empires, in this case the same thing: the Seleucids. No fewer than five major wars, called the Syrian Wars, were fought between 274 and 200 BC. Poor documentation, particularly for the early wars, leaves the specifics (even the point of their dates) murky, but clearly the "Syrian Question" became very serious very early.



Coin depicting a war elephant.

## THE SYRIAN QUESTION

By the outbreak of the First Syrian War (274–c. 271 BC), Ptolemaic Egypt wielded influence over the Aegean island coalition (the Nesiotic League) and various cities in coastal Asia Minor and owned outright Cyprus, Cyrene, and southern Syria. The first three wars (to about 241 BC) were fought primarily in Anatolia and the Aegean, and several cities, ports, and entire regions changed hands more than once; after this war, however, the Ptolemaic Empire seemed triumphant, thanks in part to internal revolts within the Seleucid Empire. Not until Antiochus III took the Seleucid throne in 223 BC would the empire begin to recover some of its territory, starting not with Syria but with the ever-combative eastern provinces of Bactria and Parthia.

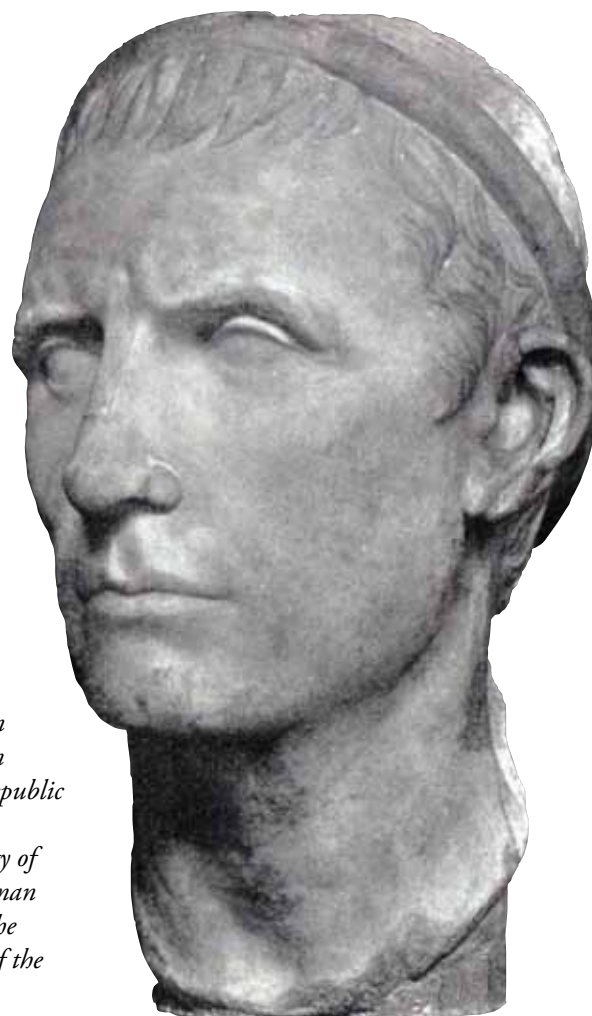
Antiochus's first campaign against Egypt, however, ended poorly, with the Seleucids losing yet more territory in the Fourth Syrian War (219–217 BC). In the Fifth Syrian War, Antiochus turned things around, taking advantage of Egyptian dissatisfaction with foreign rulers and a newly crowned five-year-old pharaoh, Ptolemy V Epiphanes (205–180 BC). With Macedonian support, Antiochus marched through Syria in 201 BC, starting with a siege of a truculent Gaza but otherwise the Seleucids apparently enjoyed local support. One of the pharaoh's generals, Scopas, retaliated, retaking Samaria, Batanea, Jerusalem, Abila, and Gadara, and marching as far as Panion (Banias), but there he met defeat and was forced to retreat to Sidon, which was rapidly besieged. For the next two years or

so the Egyptians continued to put up resistance, but the balance of power had irrevocably shifted.

The Seleucids did not retain the upper hand for long, however. Constant bickering over succession, revolts, and invasions sapped the empire's strength. Both Egypt and the Seleucids had exhausted themselves in their battles over Syria, with the result that neither could effectively stand up to a youthful and bellicose Rome, drawn into the fray by the early second century BC. In the end, it was a triumphant Rome, not Alexander's heirs, who answered the Syrian Question.

Right: *Antiochus III the Great was a Greek Seleucid king. He declared himself "champion of Greek freedom against Roman domination," and fought and lost a war (on the Greek mainland) against the Roman Republic in 192 BC. He reigned for 36 years.*

Below: *A map of Asia Minor after the treaty of Apamea between Antiochus III and the Roman Republic in 188 BC. It shows the extent of the Kingdom of Pergamum and the Kingdom of the Seleucids.*





# ROMAN-PARTHIAN WAR

Parthia, a region located in modern Iran, was a satrapy under the Achaemenid Empire and continued as a vassal under the Seleucids, but very quickly began agitating under Hellenic rule for independence. This occurred under Arsaces I (r. c. 250–211 BC), who resettled his people south of the Caspian Sea in the second half of the third century BC and immediately began a cautious southward expansion. Despite attempts by the Seleucid Empire to subdue the Parthians, the best the Seleucids could do was compromise, recognizing the Parthian leaders as kings but, for example, still requiring Parthian soldiers to fight in the Seleucid army.

## The Silk Road

Although the Parthian Empire endured for some 500 years, it passed into relative obscurity without making the kind of major, lasting cultural changes that other empires were known for. Although it took control of a vast territory, the empire was not militaristic so much as opportunistic: and the greatest opportunities came not from war but trade. As early as Arsaces I, the emperors built capitals along what became the Silk Road, the vital overland trading route that linked the silk manufacturers of China with the empires of the West. Diplomatic relationships with China remained friendly and stable for essentially the entire Parthian period, so that Silk Road trade peaked and Parthia became very wealthy.

## PARTHIAN EXPANSION

Parthia emerged again in the 170s BC, further consolidating its home territory and expanding into Media, which the Parthians conquered in 155 BC. By then the Seleucid Empire was beginning to shake itself apart and the Parthian king, Mithradates I (r. c. 171–138 BC) capitalized on its weakness to take Herat, Babylonia, and Elam (by then known as Susiana), and assumed the ancient Achaemenid title “King of Kings,” thus signaling an early rejection of Hellenic culture in favor of Persian. Mithradates’s son, Phraates II (r. c. 138–128 BC) met the Seleucids in battle without losing any territory but had he difficulty dealing with nomadic raiders from the north, a problem that plagued the Parthians for the duration of their empire.

Phraates’s successor, Mithradates II, became known as “the Great”: his reign, from 123 to 88 BC, constituted a Parthian golden age. He put down revolts in Mesopotamia that had shaken the dynasty in the previous few years and dealt a decisive blow against the northern nomads. He also launched several fresh military campaigns, both in the east and the west, where he took Persis and Armenia but stayed out of the Mithradatic wars—the first time treaties between Rome and Parthia were

concluded. By 40 BC the Parthians had invaded the Levant, seizing Judea and interfering in the election of the high priest in Jerusalem, but they did not hold this territory long. Despite their vast holdings, the Parthian army remained quite small, perhaps only 60,000 soldiers, and their wars (particularly with Rome) were nearly always defensive ones.



## “Mithradates, He Died Old”

The wealthy, wily king of Pontus, Mithradates VI (r. 120–63 BC), drove Rome to distraction, fighting three wars between 89 and 63 BC, fomenting rebellion, mutiny, and anti-Roman sentiment in all regions surrounding the Black Sea, and forging a rival kingdom right on Rome’s doorstep. In the First Mithradatic War (89–85 BC), Mithradates threw the Romans out of Anatolia and Greece and orchestrated a massive massacre of Romans throughout Anatolia; in the Third (73–63 BC), Mithradates escaped again and again from the avenging Pompey, unseated only by a coup by his own son and dying by his own hand. Beset his whole life by powerful enemies within and without—including his own mother—Mithradates’s suicide was a final insult to Rome, which never satisfactorily defeated him. His triumph was phrased succinctly by a British poet in 1896 thusly: “I tell the tale that I heard told/Mithradates, he died old.”



Above: A 14th-century manuscript showing scenes from the life of Alexander the Great. In this instance Alexander’s infantry is invading Athens.

Above right: Mithradates VI of Pontus, also known as Mithradates the Great, is best remembered as one of the Roman Republic’s most successful enemies.





Above: A map of Asia Minor in 63 BCE, showing Roman Provinces and Protectorates, and also the borders of the Persian Empire.

## PRELUDE TO BATTLE

In 55 BC, a Roman triumvir named Marcus Licinius Crassus made the ill-fated decision to invade Parthia. Although the unprovoked invasion without question broke every friendly treaty ever made between the two powers, Crassus was not operating in a complete vacuum. His fellow triumvir Pompey, who had been far more successful (although the third, Julius Caesar, outshone them both), had recently taken advantage of the death of the king of Pontus, Mithradates VI, and seized control of or established allies in border territories like Armenia, Colchis, Cilicia, and Syria. Pompey insulted the Parthian ruler by refusing to acknowledge him as an emperor and also refused Parthia's suggestion that the Euphrates mark the boundary between the empires.

## THE BATTLE OF CARRHAE

To compete with his fellow triumvirs, Crassus took seven legions and a company of horsemen—in all numbering about 44,000 men—into Parthia, crossing the Euphrates from Syria and aiming for Seleucia, Parthia's capital.

A Parthian general (known only by his family name, Suren) met Crassus in 54 BC near Carrhae, a town in the desert between the upper Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Against Crassus's 44,000 troops Suren fielded only 10,000: 9,000 horse archers and 1,000 cataphracts—armored knights who bore heavy spears and rode specially bred horses. Crassus appeared to have the advantage, even though his men had just completed a hard march and had no experience with the dust and heat of the Mesopotamian desert.

Crassus's infantry formed a square while their cavalry faced off against the Parthians. The experienced Parthian horsemen quickly dispatched this force, and began a steady siege of the infantry square, sending in storms of arrows punctuated by cataphract charges. Crassus was inclined to wait it out, expecting Suren would quickly exhaust his supply of deadly arrows. But in

addition to his horses, Suren had brought a thousand Arabian camels, which were deployed to resupply the horse archers. With one camel for every ten horse archers, the Parthian archers could rest and replenish their supplies—apparently indefinitely. In the end, the Romans broke. Only 10,000 survived the battle, with Rome's reputation a lasting casualty in the East.

## MARK ANTONY'S DEFEAT

For the most part, Parthia rested on her laurels after Carrhae, newly secure in her position. Rome, however, nursed a grudge, and in 36 BC the famous general Mark Antony sought revenge. He crossed the Armenian mountains, but failed to win support from the Armenian king. Parthian raids interrupted his supply train, his siege engines were stolen or destroyed, and when Parthia repulsed him at Praspas, he abandoned the venture. In the following two centuries, however, the Parthian Empire was fatally weakened by Roman invasions and dynastic contests. In the third century AD, it collapsed altogether in the face of the new Middle Eastern power, the Sassanians.



Above: Publius Licinius Crassus, son of Marcus Licinius Crassus, minted this denarius in 55 BC. It depicts Venus—possibly in honor of Julius Caesar, his commanding officer.



Right: Marcus Licinius Crassus was a politician and Roman general who played a major role in the expansion of the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire. He became hugely wealthy, and is considered to be among the wealthiest men in ancient history.

## Parthian Shot

In the first exchanges on the Silk Road, merchants traded Chinese silk for Parthian horses, at the time considered the finest in the world. The might of Parthia depended on these animals: Parthian warriors were either armored nobles atop heavy chargers or horse archers riding lighter, swifter steeds. The archers' penchant for shooting backward from a retreating horse produced the still-used phrase "Parthian shot," describing any hostile remark made while leaving. The Parthians also fielded infantrymen, but the decentralized structure of the empire, while it helped keep internal peace, was not conducive to raising large armies.



# THE SASSANID EMPIRE

In AD 226, a warlord and petty king named Ardashir slew the last Parthian emperor in battle at Hormizdagan. Having already established control over former Parthian provinces on the northern shore of the Persian Gulf, Ardashir now entered the Parthian capital of Ctesiphon and established a new Persian dynasty, the Sassanid, which would rule until 651. The Sassanid Empire looked to the glory of its Achaemnid past and consciously reinstated a sense of Persian nationalism, among other things adopting the ancient Zoroastrian religion as the state religion and reinventing the elite military corps known as the “Immortals.” Unlike the Immortals of Cyrus the Great (see page 134), the Sassanid Immortals were one of several units of the Saravan elite cavalry, but—just like the original Immortals—they numbered 10,000 and were held in reserve as crack troops.

The borders of the Sassanid Empire fluctuated constantly. In the west, they fought multiple wars against the western half of the Roman Empire, known anachronistically as the Byzantine Empire after the fifth century ad. In the east, Hunic and Turkic peoples migrated into or menaced the borders of the empire’s Central Asian provinces. In the end, however, it was none of these threats that ultimately ended the empire but the Arabic invasion of the seventh century AD.

## THE SASSANID EMPIRE

The Persian revival sponsored by the Sassanid state began with Shapur I, the son of Ardashir I, who reigned from AD 242 to 272; it was he who made Zoroastrianism the state religion. Under Shapur I, victorious Sassanid armies campaigned in Syria, Armenia, and Anatolia, where at the Battle of Edessa in 260 he captured the Roman emperor, Valerian. This humiliation cost Rome most of Mesopotamia, which they did not recover until 297.

The third century also saw Sassanid successes, primarily in the east, with campaigns in Khorasan, Margiana, Khwarezm, Bactria, and perhaps Sogdiana. In the middle of the following century, Shapur II, who ruled 325–379, subdued both the Transoxiana and Armenia. For the next two centuries, Persia confronted enemies on both fronts, winning and losing in turn against the Romans, Byzantines, Hephthalites, and Huns. Nevertheless the empire flourished, achieving governmental stability, grand artwork and architecture, and cultural revival.



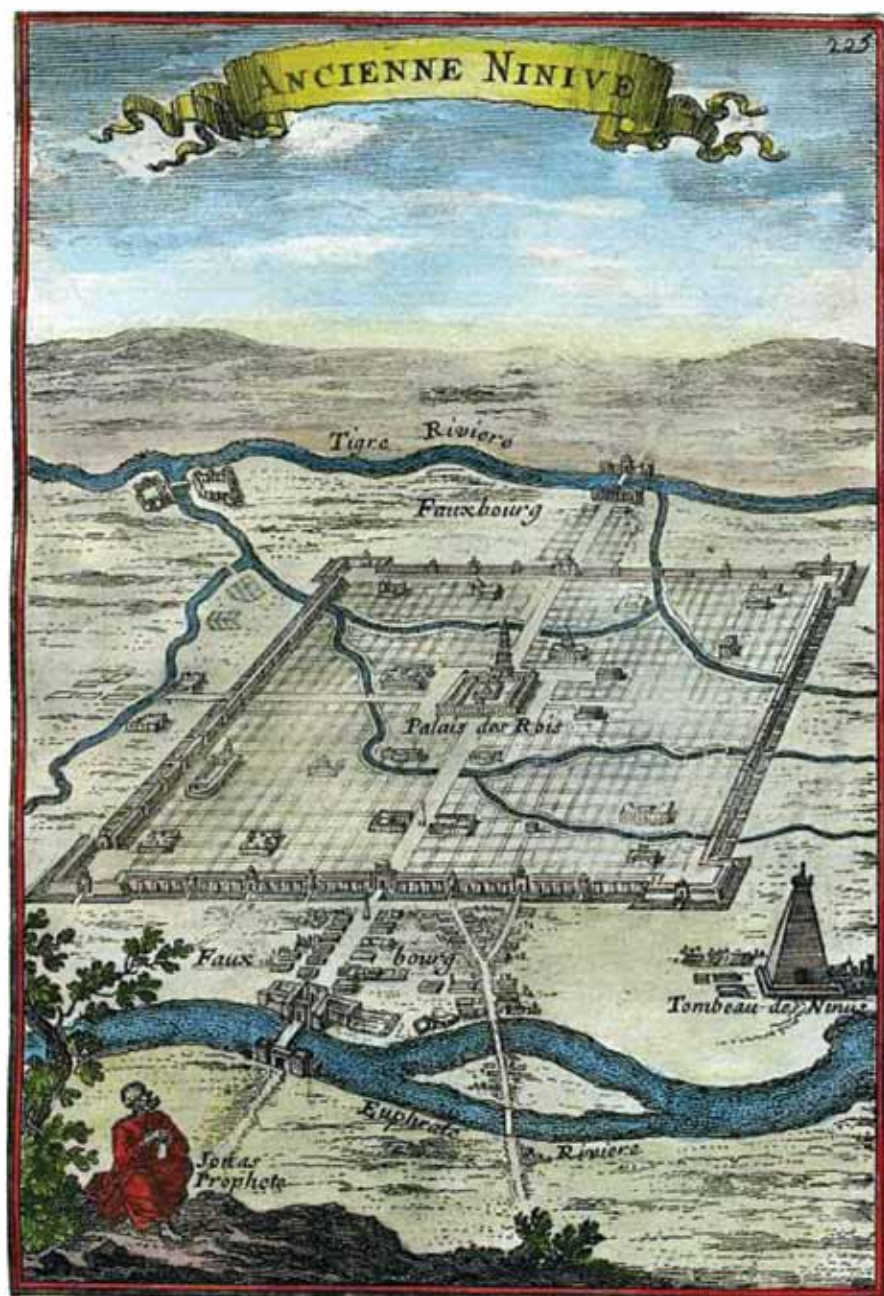
Left: A fine cameo showing an equestrian combat of Shapur I and Valerian in which the Roman emperor is seized, according to Shapur's own statement, "with our own hand," in 256.



Above: Sassanid golden jug, AD 300–400  
Left, below: *The Humiliation of Valerian by Shapur I, who is shown using the captive Emperor as a footstool from which to mount his horse.*







### COLLAPSE

In the first decades of the seventh century, the Sassanid Empire seemed poised for a period of great expansion. Sassanid armies claimed Armenia, Anatolia, and Byzantine positions in Mesopotamia; in 616 they took Egypt. The Byzantine Empire, ruled from 602 to 610 by the usurper Phocas, seemed incapable of defending itself, but in 610 a Byzantine general named Heraclitus overthrew Phocas and stepped up efforts against the Sassanids, who attacked Constantinople (the Byzantine capital) itself in 626. Heraclitus turned aside this thrust and took the offensive, chasing the Sassanids all the way across Anatolia into Mesopotamia. The two armies met in a decisive battle at Nineveh in 626 or 627. Foggy weather hindered the Sassanids, who needed to see in order to aim their ballistas, while the open ground favored the Byzantine cataphracts. Even so, the battle raged for eleven hours, until the Sassanid general—an Armenian—fell, possibly to Heraclitus himself.

The victory at Nineveh allowed the victorious Byzantine emperor to sweep through Mesopotamia into Persia proper. He captured Ctesiphon itself in 628. Byzantium's victory, however, was short-lived: the fatally weakened Sassanid Empire fell to the Arabs after losing one decisive battle at Qadisiyya in 637 and a second at Nihawand in 642—the last Sassanid emperor died in 651—but Byzantium was weakened as well, and the Arabian advance quickly filled the power vacuum in Mesopotamia and the Levant.

Left: Nineveh was an ancient Assyrian city and capital of the Assyrian Empire. It sat on the bank of the Tigris River in present-day Iraq.

Below: A golden rhyton (a cup, similar to a drinking horn) in the shape of a horse's head, from the Sassanid Empire, 6–7th century AD.





# ISLAMIC EXPANSION

The Prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam, died in AD 632 after a remarkable lifetime spent converting his fellow Arabs to Islam and uniting much of the Arabian Peninsula. Little more than a century passed before his followers had conquered an enormous swath, from the Iberian Peninsula to Central Asia. The astonishing rapidity of Islam's progress continues to amaze historians today, and the movement had immense consequences for the subsequent history, cultures, and economies of all regions it encountered.

## Arabia Before Muhammad

Although often overlooked by historians, the Arabian Peninsula had a long history before the Prophet Muhammad changed its course in the seventh century AD. Much of Arabia's story is indeed lost, since many Arabians did not produce textual evidence of their culture, particularly the nomads of the desert interior, called Arabia Deserta by Latin geographers. Arabia Petraea, in the far northwestern portion of the peninsula (including the Sinai), interacted in ancient times with Egyptian, Persian, Mesopotamian, and Mediterranean cultures, and is named after the remarkable city of Petra, built up by the Arab Nabataeans some time before the fourth century BC. The third section of ancient Arabia, Arabia Felix, comprises the southern tip of the peninsula and traded extensively via the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and overland routes—it was likely from this region that camels, domesticated by the desert tribes, were introduced to Africa. All three regions experienced frequent wars, not only internally but also with surrounding kingdoms. Arabia Felix ("Happy Arabia"), with its control of the lucrative spice trade, was a particular prize, and dealt with invasions from as far away as Rome.



Above: *Abu Bakr stops Meccan Mob from stoning his son-in-law, the Islamic prophet, Muhammad.*  
Right: *The last line of Surat An-Najm, from the Qur'an: "So prostrate to Allah and worship [Him]."*



Above: *The ascent of Muhammad to heaven on the buraq: a journey known as the Miraj. The buraq is a mythical steed, used to transport the prophets.*

## CONQUEST UNDER THE RASHIDUN

After Muhammad's death, his successors—called caliphs—combated a revolt among several Arab tribes, who were attempting to both throw off Islam and control by the caliph. The Ridda Wars, or Wars of Apostasy, ended in triumph for the first of the four "Righteous Caliphs" (Rashidun), Abu Bakr, in 633. Possibly the military momentum of this Arabian war carried the Islamic armies forward, first into areas where Arab tribes had already settled, then beyond. Although numbering only about 5,700, at least at the beginning, Muslim armies met and bested armies from two of the most powerful empires then in existence, Byzantium and Sassanid Persia.

In 637, Arab Muslims devastated a Sassanid army at the Battle of al-Qadisiyah in southern Iraq, then a province of Persia, despite being outnumbered by as much as six to one. By 638, the Arabs had conquered nearly all of Iraq. Syria—under Byzantine control—followed in 640, after the fall of Damascus in 635 and a devastating Byzantine loss at the Battle of Yarmouk in 636. Muslims sacked Ctesiphon, the Sassanid capital, in 637, and won the final victory over the Sassanids at the Battle of Nahavand in 641. The following year, the rich city of Alexandria fell, with the rest of Egypt close behind. By the end of the Rashidun Caliphate an area extending from Herat (in modern Afghanistan) to Tripoli had been seized by Islamic armies, while Muslim raids from the border regions thrust south into Northern Africa, west into Anatolia, north into the Caucasus, and east into Central Asia.





# THE ROOTS OF ARABIC INFLUENCE

The loss of Syria to the Muslim Arabs marked a major transition in world history, transferring the entire Levant from a Hellenic sphere of influence (which dated at least to Alexander the Great) to an Arabic one. It was also the beginning of centuries of conflict between the Muslim empires of the Middle East and the evermore defensive Byzantine Empire, the eastern remnant of ancient Rome. The first major battle in the war for Syria occurred at Bosra, capital of the Byzantine vassal kingdom of the Gassanids, in June 634. A major Arabian victory at Ajnadayn (in modern Israel) on July 30, 634, opened the door to an invasion of Palestine. Subsequent victories at Marj-al-Rahit and Fahl allowed the Muslim commander, Khalid ibn al-Walid, to successfully besiege Damascus, whose surrender in September 635 marked the first time the Arabians took a significant city from the Byzantines.

## THE BATTLE OF YARMOUK

Khalid's forces were small, as few as 20,000 and as many as 60,000; too small to defend Damascus against the army now raised by the Byzantine emperor Heraclitus against him. Prudently, Khalid withdrew to defensive positions around Deraa. According to the ninth-century Muslim historian al-Baladhuri, the Byzantines cobbled together a force of 200,000; in fact, it probably numbered no more than half that. The Byzantines certainly outnumbered the Arabs, but they too took up defensive positions: the Arabs, after all, were the putative invaders.

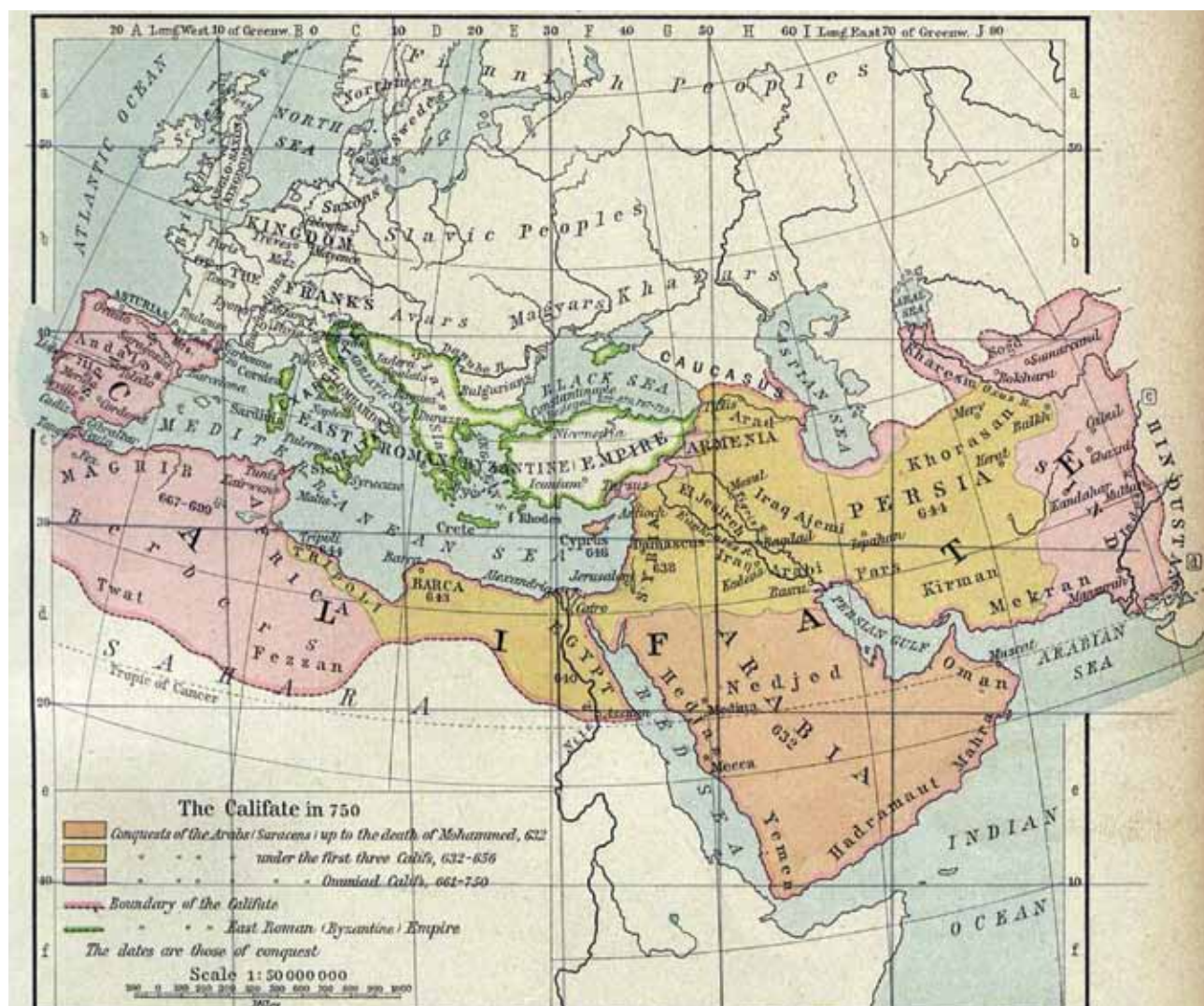
The two armies stared at each other across the Syrian Desert for some time before joining battle at the Yarmouk River. Scholars can still only hypothesize about the reasons why they finally fought, but it seems that the Byzantines were wrestling with desertions. If so, they may have decided to attack while they still had the advantage of numbers; conversely, the Arabians, if they learned of the deserters, may have attacked while Byzantine morale was low.

The sources speak of a six-day battle (with fighting halting each evening and resuming the following day). Three times, on the second, third, and fourth days, the Byzantines nearly swept away the Arabian army, but each time the Muslim army barely held, thanks in large part to Khalid's insistence on keeping the cavalry in reserve. On the sixth day, however, Khalid took the offensive (possibly aided by a sandstorm), sending his cavalry in a flanking maneuver that forced the Byzantine cavalry to withdraw, allowing the Muslims to mop up the infantry.

The destruction of Heraclitus's army at Yarmouk allowed the Muslims to flood Syria and Palestine, transforming Islam from a minor religion into a world power. Not until the formation of Israel in the twentieth century would any nation in the Levant be anything but Muslim (excepting the short-lived Crusader states in the Middle Ages). More immediately, the assumption of control in the region allowed Muslim expansion into Persia, Egypt, and Anatolia—which was still held by a shaken Byzantine Empire.

Above right: A map showing the Califate in AD 750, showing "conquests of the Arabs over three different time spans.

Right: The courtyard of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. This mosque is one of the largest and oldest in the world.





# SHIA AND SUNNI

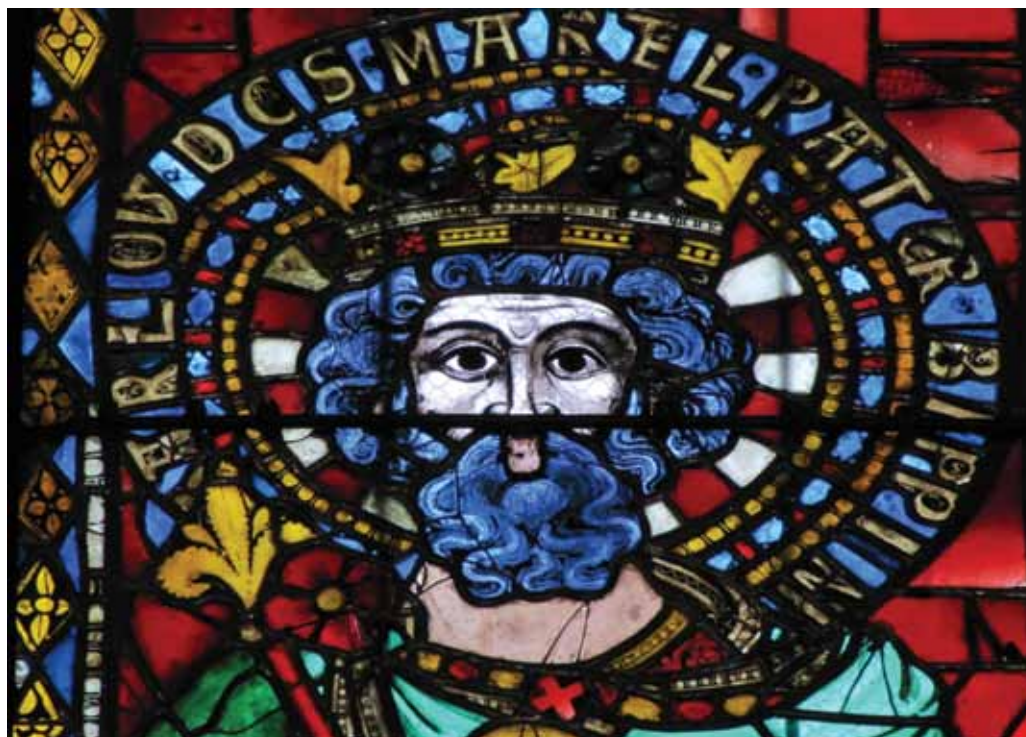
Despite resounding Arab success on the battlefield, the inner Arabic world was pierced by strife. Uthman, third of the Rashidun caliphs, was assassinated in 656; his successor, Muhammad's cousin Ali, was challenged by Muawiyah, the governor of Syria and Uthman's kinsman. Ali sent about 90,000 men to hobble Muawiyah's 120,000-man rebellion; they met at the Battle of Siffin in 657 but agreed to settle matters by arbitration. By the time a fanatic sect assassinated Ali in 661, Muawiyah had set himself up to be Ali's replacement—and indeed became the next caliph, the first of the Umayyad dynasty, moving the capital from Mecca to Damascus.



Above: *Constantine IV was Byzantine Emperor from 668 to 685. He withstood a five-year Arab siege of the city of Constantinople.*

## The Siege of Constantinople

Although the Battle of Tours receives the most attention for its role in halting the Muslim advance on Europe, equally significant was the four-year-long, protracted Siege of Constantinople from 674 to 678. Byzantium's capital, Constantinople guarded the Bosphorus Straits, the crucial waterway between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara. In turn, guarding Constantinople were the famous, apparently unassailable Theodosian Walls, and a recently invented, mysterious substance called Greek fire. The secret to making this terrifying weapon, which clung to human flesh and wood and burned even on water, has (perhaps thankfully) been lost. For four years, Arabian armies set out across the Sea of Marmara but ultimately had to capitulate in the face of Constantinople's stubborn defenses. A second Umayyad siege of Constantinople, from 717 to 718, also failed. Although it lost much territory elsewhere to the Umayyad invaders, Byzantium kept its capital and its empire with it.



Left: *This painting shows in a stained-glass window in Notre Dame Cathedral. Martel, also known as Charles the Hammer, led the Franks to an historic victory against the invading Arabs at the Battle of Tours.*

## CONQUEST UNDER THE UMAYYAD DYNASTY

Despite these internal divisions, which would eventually ripen into the Sunni-Shia rift, the Islamic empire continued to expand. By 707, the Umayyads had defeated the Byzantines and Berbers of North Africa, taking Tunis (Carthage) in 698 and Magrib over the next several years. In the east, Umayyad forces from Khorasan pushed into Sind, controlling the entire Indus River by 713 and the Transoxania by 715. In 711, an Umayyad army from Africa invaded Visigothic Spain and overran it with

astonishing ease, halting their advance only after their historic defeat to the Franks at the Battle of Tours, also known as the Battle of Poitiers, in 732.

By the end of the Umayyad dynasty in 750, Islamic armies had conquered territory in three continents and established one of the largest empires ever known. Persia had fallen; Byzantium, though unvanquished, had been badly shaken. For the next thousand years, Islamic rulers would dominate much of the known world.



Above: *Initially built by Constantine the Great, The walls of Constantinople are a series of stone walls built to protect the city of Constantinople*



Above: *Greek fire was an incendiary weapon, used to great effect by armies of the Byzantine Empire. Most scholars agree that Greek fire was based on crude oil, with thickening resins mixed in to make the oil thicker and the fire more intense.*



# ABBASID DYNASTY

In 718, a cousin of the Prophet Muhammad named Muhammad ibn Ali began agitating in Persia after claiming that he, not the Umayyad caliph, was the rightful heir to the prophet's legacy. Although not technically a Shia movement, Muhammad attracted Shia support against their common Umayyad enemy. Since the Umayyads maintained that their right to rule derived from the fact that their tribe, the Quraysh, was also the prophet Muhammad's, Muhammad ibn Ali's more egalitarian promises soon won support from elsewhere in the Umayyad empire as well.

## THE ABBASID CALIPHATE

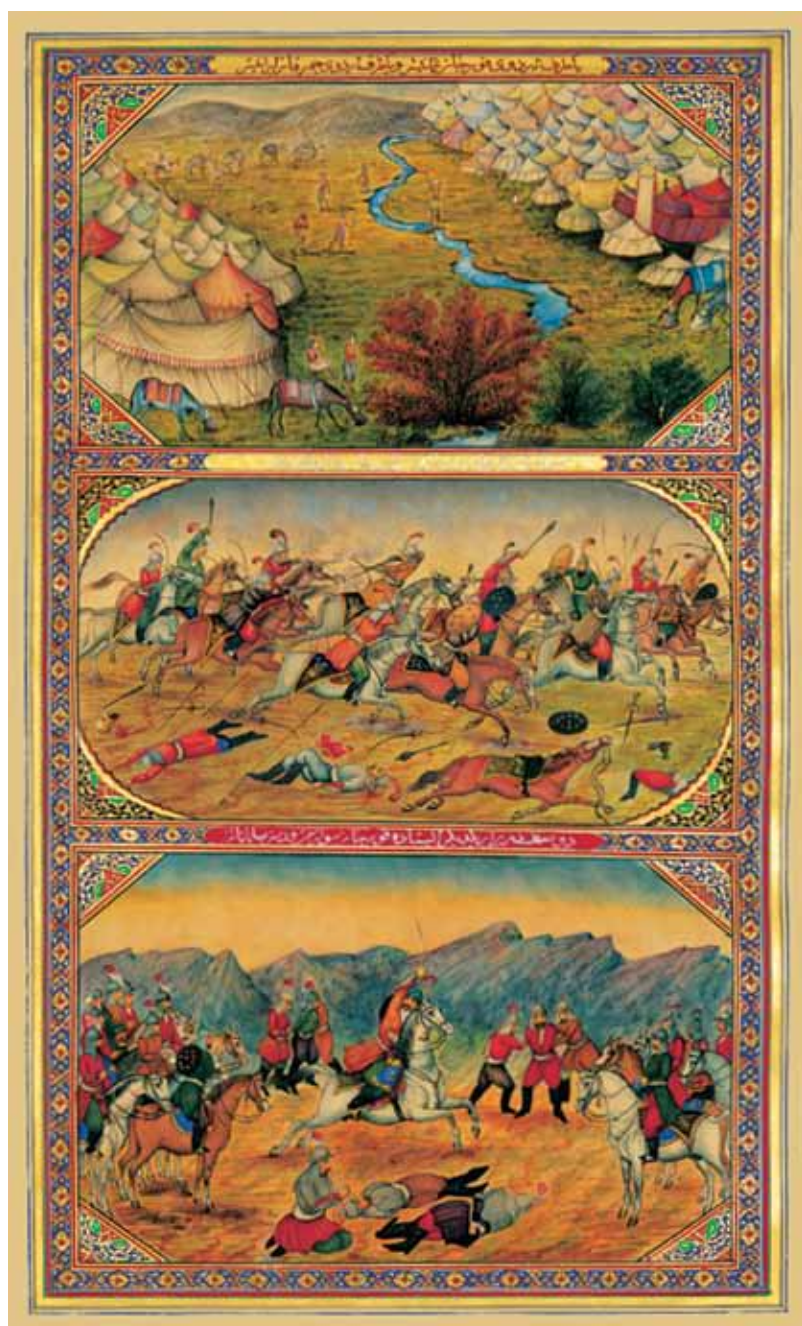
The movement did not take off until Muhammad ibn Ali's death in 743: his son and successor, Ibrahim, met with more success in disseminating his messages of subversion and revolt. These bore fruit in 747, when armed revolt finally broke out in Khorasan, led by a man named Qahtaba. Meeting success in Merv, Qahtaba led his troops on to Nahavand and, although he died shortly afterward in battle at Kufa, the city fell. Because Ibrahim had died, the revolutionaries named another of the prophet's relatives, Abu Salama, caliph. In 750, with support especially from Yemeni Arabs and Khorasan, the new caliph's armies smashed those of the last Umayyad caliph, Murwan II, at the Battle of the Great Zab River. Although Murwan escaped, the Umayyad reign was over, and the triumphant Abbasids—named after their ancestor al-Abbas, uncle of the Prophet Muhammad—set about executing every remaining Umayyad notable. Murwan himself was caught and executed in Egypt.

## GOLDEN AGE AND DISSOLUTION

For the most part, the Abbasids did not conquer new territory, though invasions of Asia Minor in the late eighth century forced the Byzantine Empire to humiliating terms and in the early ninth century the Abbasids raided the Eastern Mediterranean and captured a few Anatolian cities (including Ankara). Even the Abbasid golden age, which was roughly coterminous with the reign of its most famous caliph, Harun al-Rashid (786–809 BC), witnessed rebellions in Egypt, Syria, eastern Iran, and southern Arabia. These were suppressed, but discontent in Tunisia reached such a peak that the caliph permitted them to go their own way, paying tribute but otherwise operating independently.

Soon other regions demanded, and received, the same treatment, so that even as the Abbasids grew wealthier and their capital at Baghdad grew to the fabled proportions described in the collection of tales known as *One Thousand and One Nights*, their empire was dissolving around them. In the tenth century nearly all of their territory disappeared, claimed in Persia by the Samanid or Buyid empires and in Egypt and the Levant by the Fatimids. The caliph had become a powerless, religious figurehead, while the temporal world rushed on without him, but the caliphate did not officially end until the Siege of Baghdad in 1258 (see page 184).

Left: Scenes from *One Thousand and One Nights* depicting famous Muslim battles.



Right: *The Battle of Badr*, in present-day Saudi Arabia, was a pivotal point in Muhammad's struggle against his Quraysh opponents in Mecca, and a key battle in the nascent days of Islam. Badr was the first large-scale battle between the Muslims and Meccans; the Muslims defeated an army three times their size.



Above: An Abbasid coin from Baghdad in present-day Iraq, circa 1244.

Top: The Great Zab is a roughly 250-mile long river that flows through present-day Iraq and Turkey. In 550 BC, Abbasid As-Saffah defeated Marwan II, the last Umayyad caliph, in the Battle of the Zab on the banks of the Khazir River, a tributary.



# BATTLE OF MANZIKERT

By 1071, the Muslim threat to the Byzantine Empire was no longer the Abbasid caliph, ruler of Islam in name only, but the Seljuks, a Turkic people who had deposed the Buyids in Baghdad and removed the last bit of temporal power from the caliph in 1055. The Seljuks started raiding Byzantine Anatolia soon afterward, and in 1071 Emperor Romanus IV decided to put a stop to it. Abandoning his conquest of southern Italy (soon to be conquered by the Normans), he raised an army of up to 50,000 men in the east and marched to Manzikert, a fortress that had just fallen to a Turkish army under Alp Arslan.

## The Cataphract

Cataphracts were armored warriors mounted on horseback, often compared to the knights of late medieval Europe, but although they reached their zenith concurrently (and not coincidentally) with that of the medieval Byzantine Empire, the cataphract had ancient origins. The Seleucids and the Parthians before them fielded armored cavalry called cataphracts, from a Greek word meaning “covered.” The Romans learned the hard way that Eastern terrain favored cavalry over their preferred infantry and began incorporating cavalry units well before the breakup between East and West. Unlike the European knight, the Byzantine cataphract retained his relationship to his nomadic predecessors by the inclusion of a bow in his standard equipment and the use of scale armor from neck to knees, rather than full armor. Cataphracts carried no special social status, unlike European knights, and their position was not hereditary; tactically, they operated in waves rather than a full charge. For centuries the cataphracts were the backbone of the Byzantine army; from about the eighth through the tenth centuries they were one of the world’s most successful and formidable fighting forces.



Above: A relief image of a Parthenian Cataphract (armored heavy cavalry) in the Battle of Manzikert.

Right: An illumination from the 11th-century *Synopsis of Histories* by Greek Historian John Scylitzes, depicting a cavalry battle between Arabs and the Byzantines in AD 842.

## THE BATTLE OF MAZIKERT

The fortress fell easily and Romanus then divided his army, sending a contingent to besiege the Turkish fortress of Akhlât. Shortly afterward Alp Arslan returned to Manzikert and surprised the unprepared Byzantines. Romanus ordered a withdrawal, whereupon his Turkish mercenaries deserted to the enemy. The following day—August 19, 1071—Romanus drew up his remaining forces. In the past, the heavily armored Byzantine knights called cataphracts had proven their ability to confront lightly armed horse archers, a type favored by the Turks, but in this instance the terrain favored the horse archers and the Byzantine army, now numbering about 30,000, had no advantage of numbers. At the end of the day, facing defeat, Romanus tried to withdraw, but was forced to turn and face the Turks again, who ceaselessly harassed the retreating Byzantines. Romanus’s rear guard, however, perhaps led by a treacherous commander, continued the retreat, and without their support the Byzantine army was quickly surrounded and defeated, with Alp Arslan capturing Romanus himself.

## AFTERMATH OF MANZIKERT

Alp Arslan treated Romanus with dignity and released him for a hefty ransom. Romanus might have done better to stay with the Turks, however, for during his captivity he had lost his crown in a palace coup and was shortly captured, blinded, and exiled by his Byzantine compatriots. The resulting Byzantine confusion did nothing to prevent an influx of Turks to Anatolia, the beginning of a cultural and political takeover whose ultimate result—the modern state of Turkey—demonstrates the longevity of their legacy.

More immediately, the loss of Anatolia dealt a heavy blow not only to the Byzantine Empire, thus deprived of an important source of wealth and manpower, but also to Christian Europe in general, for now all access to Palestine (the Holy Land) had been severed. Meanwhile, the Seljuk Empire continued to expand, and although relatively short-lived—it collapsed in 1194—it grew to cover an enormous area and played a large role in the dissemination of Islamic culture in Syria and Anatolia. It was also the prime target of the Crusaders, pressed by (among other things) the loss of Anatolia to regain the Holy Land for Christendom.





# THE FIRST CRUSADE

When Pope Urban II called for a crusade in November 1095—to recover Christian territory lost to the Muslims and to protect the Holy Sepulcher, Jesus Christ’s tomb, from Muslim designs—he could not have known that he was precipitating not a single military venture but a centuries-long movement, which would become embedded in medieval European culture and affect the economy, society, and politics of Europe for centuries to come. Traditionally, historians have counted nine crusades, but more recently it has become clear that this system is flawed; not only were there many more crusades the ninth, “last” crusade (1271–1272). Nevertheless, the most famous crusades are still known by their traditional numbers.

## DEUS LE VOLT

Answering the pope’s call to arms, and the people’s resounding reply, “*Deus le Volt!*” (“God wills it!”), were four armies led by Godfrey of Bouillon and Baldwin of Le Bourcq; Bohemond, Prince of Otranto; Robert of Normandy; and Raymond of Saint-Gilles, whose forces were the largest and who aspired to general command. A preceding batch of crusaders, drawn from the general populace and distressingly unruly, had departed already, massacring Jews and generally marauding their way to Constantinople, where the Byzantine Eastern Orthodox emperor waited for Christian aid against the Muslims eating away at his empire but worried about the sudden numbers of armed Catholic fanatics crossing his borders.

Internal divisions in the Christian forces threatened the enterprise from the very start. Not only were tensions visibly rising between East and West Christendom, but the Western leaders contended among themselves. Nevertheless, the First Crusade turned out to be a remarkable success. It took the Crusaders five months to cross Anatolia, winning battles at Nicaea (modern Iznik) and Dorylaeum and losing Baldwin of

Le Bourcq, who established the county of Edessa for himself.

On October 20, 1097, the Crusaders besieged Antioch, an important city with strong defenses. The siege—which proved to be as horrific for the attackers as for the defenders—lasted until June 3, 1098. By then many Crusaders had deserted; many more had fallen to starvation and disease. Bohemond took control of Antioch and stayed there.

By the time the Crusaders reached Jerusalem, on June 7, 1099, the army’s numbers had been cut in half. With the remaining 13,500 knights and infantry, they besieged Jerusalem, their ultimate goal. Another siege followed; the city fell on July 15, 1099. The Crusaders massacred many of the inhabitants.

Three Christian territories sprang up, in addition to Baldwin’s Edessa: the kingdom of Jerusalem, the principality of Antioch, and the county of Tripoli. By 1153 these Crusader states—collectively called the Latin East—controlled the coast from Ascalon north but now had to face the problems of governing and defending them.



Above: *Godfrey of Bouillon*  
Top: *The 1097 battle of Antioch, by Gustave Dore*



Above: *Baldwin entering Edessa, during the First Crusade in AD 1096. He was crowned king of Jerusalem 22 years later.*



Right: *A map of the Eastern Mediterranean (the Levant), showing the division of Muslim, Greek Christian and Armenian Christian territories.*



# THE MUSLIM WORLD

By the eleventh century the division between Shi'i Muslims and Sunni had solidified and other Muslim sects, notably Sufis and Nizari Isma'ilis (Assassins), were emerging. In addition to these religious differences, the political situation in the Muslim world had become complex and precarious.

In 1092, Sultan Malik-Shah of the Sunni Seljuk dynasty died, leaving dynastic struggles to tear apart his former empire. The Seljuks were nominally controlled by the Sunni Abbasid caliph from his capital of Baghdad, but the Abbasids had grown extremely weak: the caliph could not even field his own army. The third great Muslim power was the Shi'i Fatimid dynasty based in Egypt. Even the loss of Jerusalem and other territories could not convince all these feuding parties to turn against the common enemy.

## Saladin's Armies

Saladin, like many of his Western counterparts, led an army of diverse background, composed of Turkish and Kurdish professionals, Mamluks (slave soldiers), and Bedouin and Turkoman auxiliaries. The bulk of the army wore leather armor, although officers (emirs) and the Mamluks tended to wear heavier lamellar armor or mail. Muslim cavalry included the light horse of the Bedouin and Turkoman and the truly devastating Turkish horse archers, who operated composite, recurved bows that had a range surpassing that of the more famous English longbow and who used hit-and-run, "Parthian shot" tactics that the Crusaders simply could not effectively respond to. It was these battle tactics, plus strategy and leadership that enabled Saladin's (and other Muslim leaders') lasting victories rather than overwhelming army size, as was once believed: Saladin likely fielded fewer than 25,000, to a maximum of 30,000 at the Battle of Hattin.

Upper right: *Crusaders throwing heads of Muslims over the rampart*

Right: *Isle of Graia, Gulf of Akabah, Arabia Petraea: Samlids and Mamluks defended caravan routes.*

## SALADIN

In 1169, a force sent by the *atabak* (governor) of Mosul, Nur al-Din, managed to seize Egypt, thwarting Crusader designs on the country. Nur al-Din was a rising power in Syria, having conquered Edessa in 1144 and Damascus in 1154. Nevertheless it was not Nur al-Din, who died in 1174, but one of his Kurdish officers who would be remembered as the greatest of medieval Muslim generals.

Salah al-Din, known in the West as Saladin, was dedicated to the idea of the *jihad*, the striving to promulgate Islam, but first he turned his attentions to his fellow believers. After seizing the reins of the faltering Fatimid Caliphate upon the death of its last caliph in 1171 and imposing Sunni worship there, he then returned to Syria when Nur al-Din died and set about consolidating an empire to be ruled by himself and his clan, the Ayyubids. Not until 1183 did he turn his attention to the Crusaders. On July 4, 1187, he ensured a place in history at the Battle of Hattin, crushing the Crusaders so completely that within three months he had regained control of everything from Ascalon to Beirut, save the port of Tyre. On October 2, 1187, he took Jerusalem, shocking and horrifying Europe.



*A nineteenth-century engraving by Gustav Dore, depicting a victorious Saladin.*





Saladin and Guy de Lusignan during the battle of Hattin in 1187.



## THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The loss of Jerusalem inspired the Third Crusade (1189–92), which ended with a peace treaty on September 2. Saladin had met and bested the flower of Europe's nobility, although one of his foes, Richard I of England (the Lion-Heart, r. 1189–1199), had captured Cyprus (the dynasty he established would last for three centuries) and won impressive battles at Acre and Arsuf (both in 1191)—but he had been unable to retake Jerusalem. By this time it had become clear that in order to conquer and defend the Latin East, the Crusaders first would have to conquer Egypt, the Ayyubid power base.

In many ways the thirteenth century was both the height and the downfall of the crusading movement. On the one hand the number of crusades exploded; on the other several of these were not directed at Jerusalem or even Muslims but at political foes of the pope (such as the Hohenstaufen crusades, 1239–1268), pagans on Europe's frontiers, or even Christian heretics (the first was the Albigensian Crusade, 1209–29). Crusading in the Holy Land during the thirteenth century accomplished little, except for brief periods between 1229 and 1244 when Christians controlled Jerusalem—having won it through diplomacy rather than force.



## LOUIS IX, SAINT, KING, AND CRUSADER

Louis IX, King of France, seemed the ideal Crusader: just, beloved by his subjects, skilled in war, and genuinely devout (he was later canonized and became a patron saint of France). Yet the two crusades he led, 1248–54 and 1269–72, ended in disaster. Louis sailed for Egypt with 15,000 men in 1248, winning initial victories at Damietta and Al-Mansurah: but then Louis, along with most of his nobles, was captured and released for a large ransom. Louis's second attempt, the last major international crusade, went even worse: he fell sick and died almost immediately upon arriving in Africa.

## MAMLUK VICTORY

In 1291, a Mamluk army took Acre, the last Crusader stronghold in Palestine, and for all intents and purposes Pope Urban II's dream finally came to an end. The crusading movement, however, was anything but over. Popes, the only ones with the authority to declare a Crusade, continued to call for Crusades for centuries, although increasingly they focused on political and religious enemies within Europe, the Mediterranean islands, and North Africa. The Crusades left lasting impacts on Europe's political, economic, and social development as well as changing the history of the ruling dynasties of the Muslim world. For all this change, however, in religious terms the map of the Middle East had altered fairly little.

## Military Orders

Among the military innovations inspired by the Crusades were military orders whose members combined monkish vows with knightly duties. The first of these orders, the Templars, formed in 1119 or 1120 and devoted themselves primarily to protecting Christian pilgrims in Palestine. The Hospitallers (Order of the Hospital of Saint John, founded 1113) and the Teutonic Knights (1191) were formed originally to care for the sick and wounded but eventually adopted martial responsibilities. These knights, especially the Templars, became renowned in the Middle East for their prowess in battle; the orders represent a pinnacle of chivalry as understood in the Middle Ages. The Templars, however, rapidly became extremely wealthy thanks to the bequeathal of estates in Europe; this roused the suspicions of the king of France, who accused them of heinous heresies and successfully disbanded the order in 1312. The Teutonic Knights folded in 1525, when their leader converted to Lutheranism and took control of Teutonic lands as the Duke of Prussia. The Hospitallers are still in existence today and generally recognized as a sovereign power.

Upper left: *Louis XII was called The Father of the People, and not without reason—universally recognized as a devout and just leader, he was beloved by his subjects.*

Far left: *Richard the Lionheart's farewell to the Holy Land. According to historian Steven Runciman, "he was a bad son, a bad husband, and a bad king, but a gallant and splendid soldier." Muslim scholars, during the Crusades period and beyond wrote: "Never have we had to face a bolder or more subtle opponent."*



# SACK OF BAGHDAD

By the time of Genghis Khan's death in 1227, the Mongolian empire stretched from China to the Caspian Sea—but even with the passing of the mighty conqueror the Mongolian armies did not halt. The task of subduing the Muslims in the Middle East fell to a grandson of Genghis Khan, Hülegü. With an army of 120,000, Hülegü crossed the Amu Darya (Oxus) near Balkh on January 1, 1256, and—with the help of his ingenious Chinese engineers and siege weapons—proceeded to lay waste to the strongholds of the Assassins in the Elburz Mountains (although some, like Gerdkuh, held out against the Mongol siege for years).

## FALL OF THE ROUND CITY

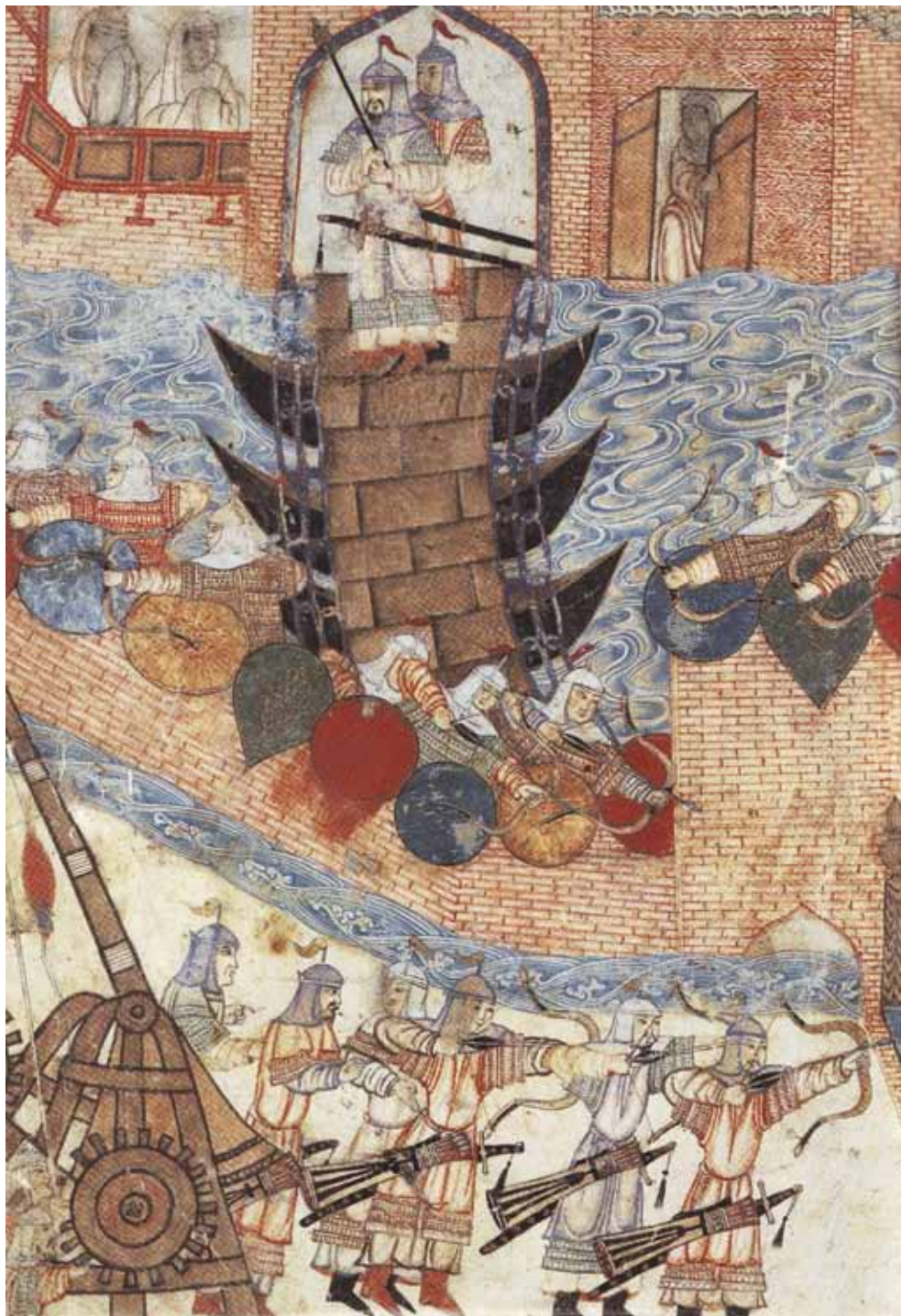
After the destruction of Alamut, the most significant of Assassin fortifications, Hülegü left the mountains and turned to Mesopotamia. He reached Baghdad, capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, in January 1258. Once the jewel of the medieval Islamic world, Baghdad had by the mid-thirteenth century already suffered from a century or two of decline, as had the caliphate it represented. Moreover, the caliph—last of the Abbasids—was incompetent and did not respond to the Mongol threat until it was too late, perhaps feeling secure between the three circular walls of Baghdad that gave the city its sobriquet, the “Round City.”

Hülegü bombarded Baghdad from January 30 to February 6; then his Mongols stormed the east wall. Over the following week the city gradually fell to the Mongols, until on February 13 Baghdad lay defenseless and the Mongols began sacking the city. The number of massacred citizens was immense, but calculations vary wildly, from 80,000 up to two million (the latter estimate strains credulity). The irrigation system was dismantled, innumerable buildings were burned, and many priceless manuscripts, housed in Baghdad since its glory days as a center of wisdom and erudition, were destroyed.

Although Baghdad's significance had already faded before Hülegü arrived, the utter devastation of the city rocked the Islamic world and Hülegü went on to conquer Syria. A Mamluk army finally defeated him at Ajn Jalut in 1260, but he had already inflicted deadly blows to medieval Islamic culture. Baghdad would not truly recover from Hülegü until the twentieth century.

Right: *Persian painting of Hülegü's army besieging Baghdad, using a siege engine.*

Below right: *The Mongol ruler Hulagu in Baghdad interns the Caliph AL-Musta'im of Baghdad among his treasures, leaving him to starve him to death. Medieval depiction from "Le livre des merveilles," fifteenth century..*



Above: *The Mongolian ruler Hulagu Khan's army conducting a siege on Baghdad's walls in 1258.*



# BATTLE OF AIN JALUT

Following the sack of Baghdad, Hülegü pressed toward the Mediterranean, invading territory already contested by Ayyubid and Mamluk Muslims as well as the Christian Crusader states. Aleppo, Damascus, Sidon, and other smaller Palestinian cities fell prey either to conquest or sacking as the Mongols turned south toward Egypt. It seemed likely that the entire Muslim world would crumble before the relentless Mongolian onslaught.



## Muslim Dynasties of Egypt

Although the Umayyad conquest of Egypt and North Africa forever brought these regions into the Middle Eastern cultural sphere, not least through the conversion to Islam, Egypt soon went its own way, achieving some measure of independence from the Abbasids as early as the eighth century. Three major dynasties ruled Egypt during the medieval period, each of them asserting control over territories far beyond the Nile—as indeed the pharaohs before them had. From 969 to 1171, the Fatimids ruled from their newly built (in 973) capital of Cairo; their fall came with Saladin, scourge of Christian Crusaders, who established the Ayyubid dynasty (1171–1250). At its greatest extent, the Ayyubid Empire encompassed Egypt, the Levant, and the western half of the Arabian Peninsula. Finally, the Mamluks came to power in 1250 and ruled until 1517, when the Ottomans took over—the first time in 700 years that Egyptians would be ruled from a foreign capital.



## THE BATTLE OF AIN JALAT

Fate intervened with the death of Möngke, Hülegü's older brother and the Great Khan. To secure his inheritance in the ensuing power struggle, Hülegü abandoned the venture in Palestine, taking much of his forces with him. He left his trusted general Kitbuqa behind with a small force of about 20,000.

It was an opportunity the Mamluk dynasty of Egypt could not afford to pass up. Hülegü's drive toward Egypt might have paused, but it would surely resume as soon as Genghis Khan's successors sorted themselves out. Rather than wait for the inevitable, the Mamluk general, a former slave named Qutuz, decided to take the offensive. The Christian Crusaders for the most part stayed neutral, but Acre offered passive support (supplies and safe passage) to the Mamluks while Antioch rather desultorily supported the Mongols.

Qutuz caught up with Kitbuqa near Nazareth at a place called Ain Jalat, "Goliath's Spring," on September 3, 1260. With only 20,000 men himself, Qutuz did not risk a frontal assault but resorted to trickery, hiding some of his force behind the hills and sending in his cavalry, who engaged the Mongols only to retreat. The Mongols took the bait, nearly so well that Qutuz's temporarily divided forces faced annihilation. One flank of the Mamluk line did indeed fold, but the remainder held on just long enough to spring the trap. Mamluks poured in from all sides, neatly snapping up the Mongol army and capturing, then executing, General Kitbuqa.

## MONGOLS AND MAMLUKS

Although the numbers involved were relatively small, the Mamluk victory at Ain Jalat was the turning point in the Mongol conquest of Muslim lands. By saving Egypt from a Mongolian invasion, the Mamluks preserved Islam—the religion to which the victorious Mongols in traditionally Muslim lands eventually converted. Cairo, not the ravaged Baghdad, became the new center of gravity in the Islamic world, at least for a time: the triumphant Mamluks made short work of the remaining Crusader states in the Levant.

For the Mongols, the defeat at Ain Jalat proved to be their low-water mark. It had been their first major defeat and they would never make any further gains in the Middle East. Although they continued to have successes in China and Eastern Europe, Ain Jalat had demonstrated that they were not invincible, and indeed the unity of the vast Mongol Empire hardly lasted for a generation beyond it.



Top: *Persian coin*

Above left:

*From 1256 to 1258, the Mongol forces deployed an estimated 300,000 warriors as well as siege engines, like the trebuchet being prepared for use above, to subdue more than 200 fortresses in northern Iran and the Levant.*

Left:

*A Mamluk nobleman in remarkable Mamluk costume, including the embroidered shawl around the waist and the distinctive turban. The rope he holds suggests that he was a horseman, as does the long lance that had made the Mamluks so feared in battle. The Mamluks had governed Egypt from 1250 until the Ottoman conquest of 1516–17.*



# TIMUR

The Persians called him Timur-i-Leng, “Timur the Lame.” In English the slur became “Tamerlane.” Timur called himself the “Scourge of God” and the “Conqueror of the World.” He did not, in fact, conquer the world, but he did subjugate an astonishing amount of it in an even more astonishingly short period of time. In only sixteen years, Timur, born into the obscure Barlas clan of mixed Turkic and Mongolian ancestry, had established an empire from Delhi, India, to Anatolia. Timur, who sought to reconstitute Genghis Khan’s dominion, would be the last of the great Central Asian conquerors.

## Timur’s Army

Nobody knows the size of Timur’s armies, although they must have been both large and flexible. Cavalry, both the standard horse archer and the heavier cavalry, similar to a cataphract, formed the elite core of the horde, but Timur also employed infantry and siege-weapon units. Despite the image of a disorganized marauding swarm, Timur’s army, like the Mongol armies before him, was highly organized into divisions of 10, 100, and 1,000 men, up to a 10,000-man *tuman*, and it was regularly subjected to massive, two-day-long reviews performed by Timur himself. Besides the ubiquitous bow and arrows, soldiers might carry spears, maces, swords, daggers, and shields—and sometimes all of the above. Timur’s attention to detail was legendary, extending even to the arrangement of tents in camp. Given the distances he roamed with his army, it is fair to surmise that his organizational skills at least equaled his tactical abilities. He held his army—which was comprised of many ethnicities, including many conquered peoples—together through a mixture of fear and enticement: only conquest, and fresh riches, could keep such a horde on the move.

Above right: *Timur the Great’s imprisonment of Ottoman Sultan Bayezid*

## TIMUR THE LAME

In 1941, Soviet archaeologists opened Timur’s tomb in Samarkand and discovered evidence that he had, in fact, been lame. An injury in his youth, during the interminable tribal wars of the Central Asian steppes, had left his right arm and leg partially paralyzed, so that he could scarcely walk. For the master of a horse people, the injury proved insignificant, and four years after receiving it Timur, working under his brother-in-law Husayn, took over Samarkand, an important city sitting astride the ancient Silk Road. Four years after that, in 1370, Timur slew Husayn, conquered Husayn’s home base in Balkh, and married his widow Saray, whose descent from Genghis Khan enabled Timur to present himself as the great Mongol’s heir.

For the next sixteen years, Timur remained in Transoxania and in Khwarezm and Jatah, which he brought under his control. In 1386, however, another commander seeking the glory of Genghis Khan, Tokhtamysh, reunited the Golden Horde and invaded Persia, ravaging the Caucasus and seizing Tabriz. Perceiving Tokhtamysh’s actions as a challenge, Timur took his armies to Georgia, where he campaigned for three years—and began his attempts to “conquer the world.” Concurrently, he began campaigning in Armenia and Persia, sacking Isfahan in 1367 and slaying 70,000 civilians in the city. As his tallies of conquered and sacked cities mounted, so too did reports of such atrocities: people tortured, buried alive, drowned, stuffed living into the walls of towers as they were built; but Timur, although undeniably brutal, deliberately disseminated such reports to magnify fear. He used every trick in the book, on the battlefield and off, displaying a tactical genius that exploited battlefield peculiarities as well as softening the ground beforehand with psychological tactics of terror.

## CONQUEST

By the end of 1387, Timur had added all of Persia to his realm, but soon full-scale war broke out between Timur and Tokhtamysh, whom Timur had once sheltered as an exile in his court. Battles between the two Mongol leaders echoed back and forth across the steppes until the Battle of Terek in 1395, a resounding victory for Timur. Not satisfied with this, however, Timur ranged north, scattering the Golden Horde and reaching Moscow in 1396. Between battles with the Golden Horde, Timur had put down two revolts in Persia (in 1392 and 1396–97) and a revolt in Armenia and had conquered Mesopotamia and Georgia (again), also in 1395.

## VENTURING INTO INDIA

In 1396, Timur was at least sixty years old and had brought large segments of Central Asia and the Middle East to heel. He apparently decided to settle down in Samarkand, where he forcibly resettled artisans and craftsmen from conquered territories in order to transform the city into a glorious example of urban design. In 1398, however, Timur’s itch for conquest drove him to new heights—literally, as he rejected his advisors’ pleas to abandon his plans to invade India via a mountain pass nearly three miles high. Almost nonchalantly defeating the Kalash tribesmen on his treacherous passage through the Hindu Kush, Timur succeeded where Alexander the Great had failed, bringing his army into India.

The Battle of Delhi, fought in December of 1398, was one of Timur’s greatest achievements. Using fire, he spooked the Sultan



Right: *Timur defeats the Sultan of Delhi.*



# “Alas, poor Turk! His fortune is too weak/T’encounter with the strength of Tamburlaine.”

—CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, *Tamburlaine the Great*



of Delhi’s primary weapon, 120 armored war elephants. These massive beasts, terrified, rampaged through their own army, transforming the sultan’s troops from a virtually unassailable tidal wave into a disorderly mess, easy for Timur and his riders to decimate. The two weeks the victors spent in Delhi were possibly the darkest the city has ever known. Denuding the city of everything valuable and destroying the rest, Timur’s army inflicted so much damage that it would take nearly a century for Delhi to recover. Timur, a raider at heart, took the war elephants with him when he left in midwinter.

## THUNDER AND IRON

By 1400, a confrontation between Timur (“iron” in his native tongue) and Bayezid I, “the Thunderbolt” who had recently decimated the flower of European chivalry at the Battle of Nicopolis (see page 80), had become unavoidable. They were both Muslims, but Timur had a habit of placing opportunity before piety (he declared his invasion of India a *jihad*, claiming the Muslim rulers had been too lenient with the practicing Hindus) and Bayezid I had captured a fortress belonging to an ally of Timur’s and, worse, sheltered a Turkic chief who had managed to escape Timur’s wrath.

Before dealing with Bayezid, Timur had to reach him. Once again he ravaged Georgia and reoccupied Baghdad, which he had taken from the Mamluks of Egypt (another Muslim dynasty) in 1393. From there he marched into Mamluk-held

Syria and devastated Aleppo before moving on to the capital of the province, Damascus. There he carried out one of his worst atrocities, burning a number of people alive inside the Umayyad Mosque. He left the city smoking and ruined and decorated with his usual calling card: a pyramid of his victims’ skulls.

## “ALAS, POOR TURK!”

In 1402, Timur marched into Ottoman Anatolia, skipped past Bayezid I, who had set out to meet him, and established himself near Ankara (also known as Angora). Immediately Bayezid came about and rushed west to meet the aging conqueror. It was the middle of summer, hot and dry on the Anatolian plains, and Bayezid made sure to station his troops near the stream. But Timur had dammed the source, allowing only a trickle through to fool the thirsty Turks, and as soon as the battle was joined he sealed the rest. Already tired and hot from the hard, lengthy march, Bayezid’s troops withered while Timur’s kept themselves well hydrated. With the aid of his Indian war elephants, Timur shattered Bayezid’s army. The sultan escaped the battle only to be surrounded, captured, and killed.

The victory at Ankara was a diamond in Timur’s already shining crown, but it proved to be his last major victory. He had designs on both Egypt and China, but while en route to the latter he died in 1405. His incredible tomb is now one of the highlights of ancient Samarkand, a World Heritage Site.

Above: *Timur is regarded as a military genius, albeit one who was responsible for the deaths of 17 million people —5% of the world’s population. The historian John Joseph Saunders summarized that “Till the advent of Hitler, Timur stood forth in history as the supreme example of soulless and unproductive militarism.”*

Below: *Gur-e Amir is Persian for “Tomb of the King.” This architectural complex with its azure dome contains the tombs of Tamerlane, his sons, and grandsons.*





# GUNPOWDER

Although there is some controversy about where and when gunpowder was first invented—China, in the tenth century, is the usual response—military historians agree that it was the Arabs who used the first guns. The earliest incarnation of this weapon that changed warfare forever appeared in AD 1304, when Arabians devised bamboo tubes, reinforced with iron, with a gunpowder charge that launched an arrow.

It would be some time before handheld guns appeared regularly on battlefields, despite this early materialization. Gunpowder, more regularly known during its first several centuries of existence as black powder, had a more immediate effect on siege weapons; it is possible that Muslim armies were throwing a kind of gunpowder bomb with artillery weapons by 1349. Constantinople fell to Ottoman artillery in 1453. Yet it was in Europe that gunpowder truly took center stage. By the end of the fourteenth century, Europeans were firing primitive cannons at each other on the final battlefields of the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453); soon after that heavily armored knights and sword-wielding infantrymen disappeared, rendered obsolete by advances in gunpowder technology.







Left: Japanese foot soldiers firing matchlock rifles.

Right: It is possible that Muslim armies were throwing a kind of gunpowder bomb with artillery weapons by 1349, as might be seen here in this depiction of the siege of Constantinople.



Below left: An antecedent of the "sniper."



Above: Vauban Tower, in Camaret-sur-Mer, France, is a 60-foot-high polygonal defensive tower built to a plan by Vauban. It has three levels and is flanked by walls, a guardhouse, and a gun battery, which can hold 11 cannons.

Main Image: Mehmed II el-Fatih ("the Conqueror," 1432–1481) was sultan of the Ottoman Empire. He is most known for the conquest of Constantinople, which is depicted here.



### Vauban's Fortress

The brilliance of the new Ottoman siege engines against medieval fortifications in the Balkans exposed the flaws of old castles in the face of gunpowder artillery. Not only did Europeans, especially the French, rapidly develop their own new siege weapons, they scrambled to replace or renovate those former bastions of safety and symbols of feudal power. The particular genius of early modern siege warfare was a Burgundian named Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban (1633–1707), an officer in the army of King Louis XIV, whose lifetime saw sixty years of war and only seventeen of peace. Vauban revolutionized defensive engineering, so that many of his surviving fortifications have been declared World Heritage Sites. Among other innovations, Vauban introduced ricochet fire, whereby cannonballs could be made to bounce and strike several targets, and parallel trenches as a method of bringing large numbers up to the besieged fortress in relative safety—although similar tactics had in fact already been used by the Ottomans.

Left: Vauban, as the Marquis de Vauban was commonly known, was the foremost military engineer of his day, renowned for his talent in designing fortifications and breaking through them.



# RISE OF THE OTTOMANS

In the confusion surrounding Mongol advances and Byzantine retreats, several Turkoman polities emerged in Anatolia, including one led by Osman (d. c. 1324). The dynasty he founded would take its name from him, and the empire he started in northwest Anatolia would expand into a world power and survive until 1922. Osman became a semimythical figure as the founder of the Ottoman Empire, but it is actually with his son Orhan I that the Ottomans truly emerge. In 1326 Orhan conquered Bursa and made it his capital. It was the first of a series of conquests completed by Orhan and his successors. In 1331 he took Nicaea (Iznik) and in 1337 Nicomedia (Izmit); by 1347 the Ottomans controlled enough territory and trade to interfere with a succession dispute in Byzantium, which handed Gallipoli over to its rival-cum-ally in 1376. The fourteenth century ended with two climactic Ottoman victories in Europe at the battles of Kosovo (1389) and Nicopolis (1396).



## SIGNIFICANT ADVANCES

The first few decades of the fifteenth century did not look bright for the Ottomans. The sultan, Bayezid I, was captured during a crushing loss to Timur at the Battle of Ankara (1402; see pages 158–59); following his death in captivity (1403), his four sons struggled against one another in a period called the Interregnum. Fortunately for the Ottomans, Timur meant only to discourage the Ottomans from advancing into his territory, not to conquer theirs, and Europe was too busy with its own wars to pay attention to the opportunity in Anatolia. Finally one of Bayezid's sons, Mehmed I, won the throne in 1413.

Mehmed I and his son, Murad II, solidified Ottoman control over Anatolia and the Balkans. Murad II faced off against Venice and Hungary and elevated the status of the elite infantrymen

called Janissaries, and his son, Mehmed II, at the age of 21 conquered Constantinople (and the Byzantine Empire with it) in 1453.

During the next two centuries the Ottomans occasionally suffered setbacks, some of them severe, but continued to expand. By 1517 they had defeated the Mamluks, claiming Syria, Egypt, and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina; in 1521 they pushed into southern Hungary, winning a decisive victory at the Battle of Mohács in 1526 when the Hungarian king foolishly rushed 20,000 men into battle against 100,000 Ottomans. By 1574 Rhodes, Tripoli (Lybia), Cyprus, and Tunis had fallen; a few years later the Ottomans had extended fully, seizing control—briefly—of Kamianets-Podilskyi (in modern Ukraine).

Above: This map shows the borders of the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Turks in 1355, as well as the territories occupied by other empires and kingdoms.



# SACK OF CONSTANTINOPLE

As soon as the Ottomans set their sights on the Balkans in the fourteenth century, Constantinople became a primary goal of conquest. Sitting at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, the city guarded the vital waterway linking the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara (which led to the Mediterranean) .

By the time Sultan Mehmed II appeared at the city's gates in 1453, the city had been the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, or the Byzantine Empire, for eleven centuries. Although by then much diminished from the height of its former majesty, Constantinople still commanded strong defenses and had already withstood two previous Ottoman sieges, one from 1394–1402 and another in 1422. Nevertheless, although the city remained, the empire had crumbled around it: the capital was on her own.

## AT THE GATE OF SAINT ROMANUS

From a population of several hundred thousand at her height, Constantinople housed fewer than 50,000 souls in 1453 and no more than 7,000 were trained to defend her. Against this meager guard Mehmed brought somewhere between 80,000 and 150,000 soldiers, including elite Janissaries and brand-new cannons, more powerful than anything seen before.

Mehmed deployed his forces in April 1453, launching the first all-out assault on April 18. This was repulsed, while the heavy chain—or boom—across the Golden Horn kept Mehmed's fleet from the vulnerable harbor. But on the night of April 21, the Turks carried more than seventy ships overland, around Galata and so avoided the boom altogether. Soon thereafter Mehmed constructed a bridge over the Horn. Still the city held, through April and May, despite the fleet, regular assaults, and the steady pounding of the cannons.

It could not continue. The defenders were too few, the cannon too powerful, and Mehmed too determined. On May 29, on the day's third attack, the Janissaries finally breached the walls at the Gate of Saint Romanus. In the heavy fighting there the last emperor of Byzantium, Constantine XI, fought and fell, although his body was never recovered.

May 29, 1453, could be considered the last gasp of the Roman Empire, whose western half had long ago disintegrated but whose eastern sector survived as Byzantium—until, that is, the rising sun of the Ottoman Empire finally eclipsed Constantinople, last bastion of Rome.

Right: *Medieval map of Constantinople.*



## The Fourth Crusade

The Fourth Crusade (1199–1204) likely has the blackest reputation of any crusading venture in history. Initially the Crusaders intended to sail to Egypt to attack the Muslims there, for which they desperately needed money. Prince Alexios, nephew of Emperor Alexios III, offered not only to pay for the Crusade but also reconcile the Eastern Church with the Roman Catholic Church, if the Crusaders would help him defeat his uncle. From July 16 to 17, therefore, the Crusaders besieged Constantinople, until the emperor fled and Alexios IV took the throne along with his father Isaac II, who had been deposed by Alexios III. On January 25, 1204, Isaac died and the Byzantines revolted against Alexios IV, who was murdered and replaced by Alexios V (formerly the imperial chamberlain). Naturally Alexios V refused to pay the Crusaders. In retaliation the Crusaders assaulted the city again, starting on April 9. Constantinople fell on April 13. The Crusaders ravaged the city for three days in a horrific, ignominious end to the Crusade, and established the short-lived, unstable Latin Empire of Constantinople on May 16, 1204 (Byzantines retook the city and the empire in 1261). The sacking of the city cemented the schism between the Eastern and Roman churches and left lasting wounds; as recently as 2004, Pope John Paul II formally apologized to Patriarch Bartholomew for the Fourth Crusade.

Above: *The conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204.*

Far left: *The Janissaries were chosen before they reached adulthood to become the elite fighting force of the Ottoman Empire.*

Left: *Mehmed II conquered Constantinople at the age of 21, ending the Byzantine Empire. He is regarded as a national hero in Turkey.*



# SULEIMAN

The Ottoman Empire reached its zenith under Sultan Suleiman I, called “the Magnificent,” who ruled it from 1520 until his death on campaign in Hungary in 1566. Not only did Suleiman continue the path of military conquest that his father Selim I (ruled 1512–20) had forged, but he inaugurated a golden age of art, literature, and law that transformed the Ottoman Empire into the jewel of the Muslim world.



Above: *The longest-reigning Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Suleiman I was known as Suleiman the Magnificent in the West, and as the Lawgiver in the East.*



Above: *Under Suleiman's rule, the Ottomans conquered most of Hungary.*

## SELIM I

Suleiman's father, Selim, came to the Ottoman throne via a bloody civil war with his brothers, Ahmet, Şehinşah, and Korkut, squabbling for control after it became clear that the reigning sultan, Bayezid II, had become too senile to rule. Putting down a revolt in Anatolia on the way, Selim took Edirne by the end of July 1511, and executed Şehinşah. Selim suffered defeat in Thrace, but he had the support of the Janissaries, who demanded that he assume the sultanate in March 1512. By May, all of their demands had been fulfilled and Selim ascended to the throne on the death of Bayezid II; however, Selim still had to deal with his other two brothers. Fearing a revolt, he had Korkut executed near Bursa. He fought his brother Ahmet at a battle near Yenisehir; Ahmet's forces lost, and Selim ordered the execution of Ahmet.

The executions left Selim unopposed, but almost immediately Selim marched into western Persia, campaigning there in 1514 and 1515, the same year he put down a Janissary revolt. In 1516 he continued campaigning in Persia, while also conquering the remaining Shia tribes in Anatolia and beginning a war against the Mamluk dynasty of Egypt, which fell in January of 1517. Suppressing revolts in Lebanon and Anatolia ended Selim's energetic reign, which had extended Ottoman control over the rest of Anatolia, into Mesopotamia, through the Levant and the western Arabian coast as far as Mecca, and over all of Egypt.



Above: *In one of the most hotly contested battles of the sixteenth century, the Siege of Malta took place when the Ottoman Empire invaded the island in 1565.*



Above: *Belgrade was Suleiman's first conquest in 1521.*

## SULEIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT

As remarkable as Selim's sultanate was, his son would surpass him. Where Selim had ruled with an iron fist, one of Suleiman's first acts was to proclaim the rule of justice: he is still known as Kanuni, the lawgiver. Early in his reign, however, he became known as a terror in Europe, where he conquered Belgrade (1521), Rhodes (1522), and a large part of Hungary at the Battle of Mohács (1526). This battle, which pitted a paltry 20,000 desperate Hungarians and their allies against 100,000 Ottomans—who had already been victorious at Sabac and Petervárad—ended with the death of the Hungarian king and the effective dissolution of Hungary. Subsequent civil war and Ottoman invasions broke Hungary into three sections, of which the Ottomans claimed the eastern and southern two. Two unsuccessful attacks on Vienna, in 1529 and 1532, prevented Suleiman from advancing farther into Europe, but Suleiman did succeed in taking the former capital, Buda, for his own.

Suleiman's future engagements in Europe were less dramatic than his advance into Hungary, though he did raid mainland Italy, go to war directly with the ascendant Hapsburgs of Austria, besiege the Knights of Malta (formerly the Hospitallers of Rhodes, until Suleiman claimed the island), and in 1555 invaded Russia as far as Moscow, which—except for the Kremlin—he conquered.





### SECURING THE EASTERN FLANK

War between the Sunni Ottomans and the Shia Safavid dynasty of Persia had been ongoing for some time (see page 168), but Suleiman achieved the most success of any Ottoman sultan—although ultimately the Safavid dynasty survived into the eighteenth century. Suleiman invaded Safavid territory three times, in 1534, 1548, and 1554, not only for religious purposes but also to secure his eastern flank against a possible European-Safavid alliance as well as to take control of the valuable Caucasus region.

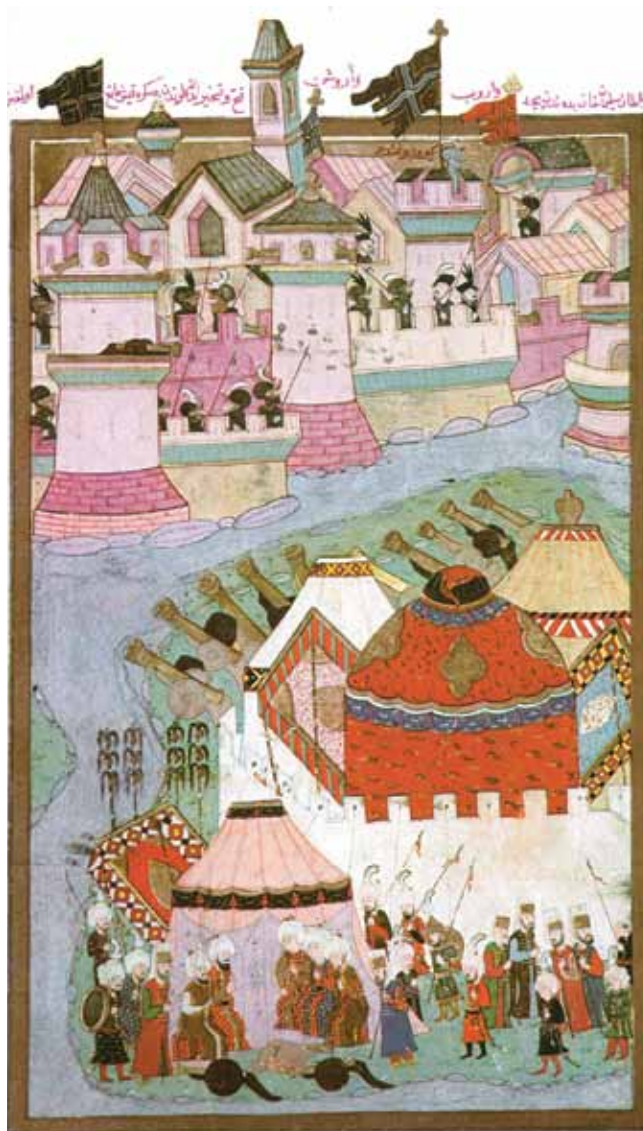
### INVASIONS OF PERSIA

During Suleiman's first invasion, his grand vizier Ibrahim Pasha conquered Tabriz, a major provincial capital, in August 1534, and followed up this success with Suleiman himself riding with the army into Baghdad the following December, occupying Kurdistan en route. By then, however, the Safavid shah, Tahmasp I (1524–1576), arrived with his army from the other side of his empire, and Suleiman retreated to Istanbul, allowing the Persians to reoccupy much of their lost territory (though the Ottomans kept Baghdad).

The second war led to little gain for the Ottomans: they reconquered Tabriz (but lost it again in 1548 after the conclusion of the war) and occupied Van, a province in Safavid-held Armenia. This they kept, warily watching the Safavids build fortification after fortification along the border.

Suleiman tried one last time to crush the Safavids in 1554. The two-year campaign saw him lose and then retake Erzurum, an important commercial center first taken by Selim I in 1515, and win several frontier battles, although the Safavid “scorched-earth” policy took a heavy toll. Finally, in 1555, the two unfriendly Muslim empires signed the Peace of Amasya, by which the Ottomans returned Tabriz but kept Baghdad and took possession of southern Mesopotamia: thus the Ottoman Empire came to link the Mediterranean Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Red Sea, vastly encouraging trade.

Toward the end of his life, Suleiman's sons threatened to repeat the kind of civil war Selim I had fought, a scenario forestalled by the execution of all but one of his sons. For the next hundred years, his successors ruled one of the most significant nations in the world, expanding its borders to their widest extent in 1683, but none of them would ever surpass the accomplishments of Suleiman the Magnificent.



Above: *The failure of the Ottomans to capture Vienna in 1529 marked the end of a series of successful conquests led by Suleiman the Magnificent throughout eastern and central Europe. More than 150 years of tension followed which resulted in the Battle of Vienna in 1683.*

### Barbarossa

One of Suleiman's most famous and successful commanders operated not on land but on the seas and began his career as little more than a common pirate. Khayr ad-Din, called Barbarossa (Red Beard), grew up on the island of Lesbos in the Ottoman-controlled Aegean Sea. He and his brother took to piracy against the Christian Spanish, Portuguese, and Italians, and made nuisances of themselves from North Africa to Venetian Greece and the Italian coast and Spain. In 1518, he offered his services to Suleiman, who not only accepted him but also sent him supplies. In 1529, Barbarossa captured Algiers; in 1534, he added Tunisia to Suleiman's possessions. In 1538, despite being heavily outgunned and outnumbered, he defeated the brilliant but duplicitous Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria at the Battle of Preveza, seizing the fortress of Actium in the process (and thus gaining full control over the Gulf of Arta). By then the erstwhile pirate had been admiral of the entire Ottoman navy for five years.

Top: *The Ottoman victory in the Battle of Mohács resulted in the partition of Hungary for several centuries between the Ottoman Empire, the Habsburg Monarchy, and the Principality of Transylvania.*



# OTTOMAN-PERSIAN WARS

With the broadest view, it can be said that the wars between the Ottoman Empire and the various dynasties of Persia in the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries form merely one chapter in the ongoing contest for Mesopotamia that has recurred nearly since the dawn of civilization. In only a slightly more narrow view, the Ottoman-Persian wars fit neatly into a long tale of attempted unity by the Muslim world, particularly violent in the Middle East owing to the location of Islam's most holy cities, Mecca and Medina. Control of Mesopotamia and Arabia meant control of access to these places, crucial in the religious conflict between the Sunni Ottomans and the Shia Persians. Conflict and contested borders led to more conflict and re-contested borders, and the issue still smarts, as the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s demonstrates (see page 174). To understand the modern history of the Middle East and the relationship between the modern states of Iran and Iraq, examining the centuries of warfare between the Ottoman Turks and the Persians is a necessary exercise.



Above: *A view of Ramatha in the Holy Land (present-day Israel) by the Dutch artist Cornelius de Bruijn, showing the city and nearby caravan camp, with Arab horsemen in the foreground.*

Below: *Tabriz is situated in the north of modern-day Iran. It was temporarily occupied by the Ottomans in 1514 after the Battle of the Chaldiran, then again from 1585 to 1603, after which it was returned to the Safavids and became a major commercial trading center.*

## STAGE 1: OTTOMAN GLORY

The Ottoman-Persian wars began early in the history of the Safavid dynasty and early in the Ottoman Golden Age, under Selim I (1512–20) of the Ottoman Empire and Ismail I (1501–24) of Persia. In 1514 the wars opened with an Ottoman invasion and seizure of Tabriz, but in 1517 Ismail I invaded Georgia, subduing the (mostly Sunni) tribesmen there. Of the following five wars between the Ottomans and Safavids (1526–55; 1578–90; 1603–12; 1616–18; and 1623–38), most ended in Ottoman victories, although some sense of the conflict can be gleaned from the fact that the Ottomans had to conquer Baghdad three times, with several failed attempts besides. On the whole, however, the Ottomans kept control of southern Mesopotamia until their collapse following World War I. The more they tried to stamp out Shia Islam in the region, however, the more the inhabitants—particularly in the urban areas—devoted themselves to Shia Islam, the dominant religion in Persia (and later Iran), and resisted the Sunni Ottomans.

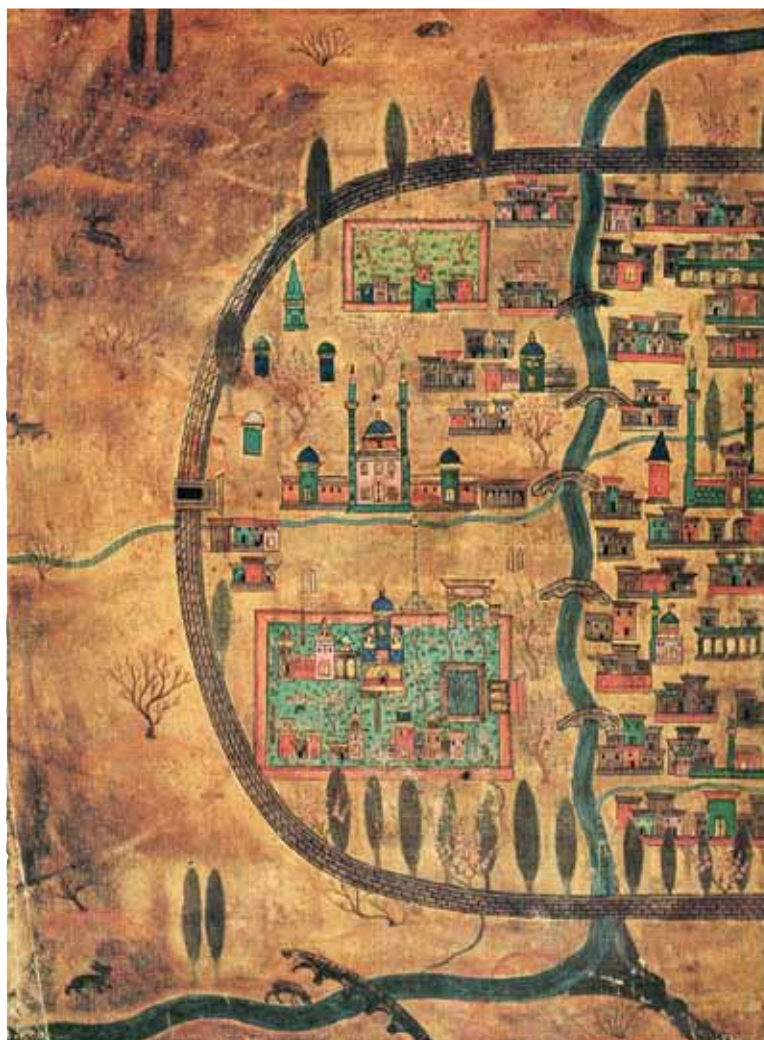
## PERSIA'S REVENGE

During the 1578–90 war, the Ottomans conquered provinces formerly ceded to the Persians, including Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Shirvan (they reconquered Tabriz in this war, as well), so as to fix the border at the points established by Suleiman the Magnificent's earlier victories. This arrangement did not sit well

with the Persians, and hostilities resumed in 1603 while the Ottomans were at a disadvantage, quelling internal rebellions and warring with the Austrians in Europe. The Safavids took Tabriz back, and then followed up with Shirvan and Kars in 1604. They lost the Battle of Lake Urmia in 1606, but managed to conquer Baghdad, Mosul, and Diarbek. In 1612 a peace treaty resulted in a Persian recovery of the territories lost in 1590 and a restitution of the 1526 border; this was confirmed after the 1616–18 war, in which the Persians defeated the Ottomans at Yerevan and Tabriz.

## THE TREATY OF ZUHAB

The final war between the Ottomans and the soon-to-be-extinct Safavid dynasty of Persia involved no fewer than five Ottoman campaigns between 1623 and 1638, resulting in a slow and choppy, but ultimately successful advance through northwestern Persia and Mesopotamia, taking Hamadan (1630), Yerevan (1635), and finally Baghdad (again) in 1638. The Treaty of Zuhab ended the war and ushered in eighty-five years of peace between Persia and the Ottomans: the Persians took Tabriz, Shirvan, and Yerevan (in modern Iran, Azerbaijan, and Armenia respectively) while the Ottomans held onto Baghdad and Mesopotamia. These borders, although hardly undisputed, remained in effect into the twentieth century.







Above: At its height, the Safavid dynasty controlled all of modern Iran, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, as well as parts of Pakistan, Turkmenistan, and Turkey.



Above: Prince Abbas Mirza was victorious over the Ottoman Empire in 1821 during the Battle of Erzurum.

## STAGE 2: PERSIAN RESURGENCE

The collapse of the Safavid dynasty in the early eighteenth century might have finally allowed the Ottomans to establish complete dominance in the Middle East, but by then they were beset by economic, social, and—now with rising European powers—military challenges. In addition, they faced Nadir Kahn (later Nadir Shah), a brilliant general who supported the weak Safavid shah until overthrowing him. Nadir Shah's rise to power was intimately connected with the first Ottoman-Persian war in almost a century, as it began with Nadir's expulsion of the Ottomans who had taken advantage of the Persian civil war to occupy Azerbaijan and other parts of northwestern Persia.

Then, however, while Nadir was dealing with a revolt in eastern Persia, Shah Tahmasp II of the Safavids, jealous of Nadir's successes, unwisely confronted the Ottomans himself and lost the Battle of Koridjan, resulting in a 1732 treaty that heavily favored the Ottomans. Nadir promptly deposed the weak shah and installed himself in his stead, first as regent for Tahmasp's infant son, and later in his own right, thus overthrowing the dynasty he had intended to restore.

## WORLDS, OLD AND NEW

Nadir Shah, who reigned until his assassination in 1747, went to war a second time with the Ottomans in 1743. He captured Kirkuk, Arbil, and Mosul—which, however, he could not hold—and the following year (1744) besieged Kars, but had to break the siege to deal with internal rebellions, some of them fomented by Ottoman operators. In 1745, he smashed an Ottoman army at Kars. The war ended in 1746 with little gained on either side. In the next major war between the two empires, both of which now badly lagged behind their northern and European neighbors in terms of military technology, Abbas Mirza, the Persian crown prince and governor of Azerbaijan (who had made efforts to modernize his forces), won a resounding victory at the Battle of Erzurum in 1821.

There, Abbas's 30,000-man modernized army defeated the 50,000-man Ottoman army, but by now the bickering between the decaying Ottoman Empire and the disintegrating Persian empire had worn itself out. Once again little territory changed hands, and though conflicts continued to break out in the border regions, each empire's major enemies were now no longer each other, but the Hapsburgs (for the Ottomans; see page 90) and the Russians (for both; see pages 92 and 169). Soon, all conflicts would pale beside the outbreak of World War I, which sounded the final death knell for the Ottoman Empire and began to redraw the map of the Middle East.



# SAFAVIDS

In 1501, for the first time since the Arabian conquest 800 years before, a native dynasty established a new rule over Persia. The empire-builder, Ismail I, conquered Tabriz in that year and declared himself shah, thereafter proceeding from his base in modern Azerbaijan to conquer territory from the Euphrates to the Amou-Darya (Oxus), though he did not retain all of this territory. Constant warfare with the Ottoman Empire (see pages 166–67) and the Uzbeks of Central Asia plagued the Safavid Empire for its entire existence, but under Shah Abbas I (r. 1588–1629) it became a major power.



Ottomans and the Uzbeks.

## ABBAS I

Ismail's successor, Tahmasp I (r. 1524–76), nearly brought the empire to utter ruin, fighting a series of losing campaigns and leaving the empire without a strong heir. The powerful Qizilbash supported first one candidate, then another, and often fought among themselves, so that it was not until 1588 that a strong leader finally took the throne. Abbas I made the difficult decision to make peace with the Ottomans, who had taken advantage of the confusion to seize enormous portions of western Persia, including Ismail I's homeland in Azerbaijan. Before resuming hostilities with them, Abbas I established control over central Persia and rebuilt his military, modernizing the weaponry and instituting—for the first time in Safavid history—a standing army. In 1598 he marched into Khorasan, which the Uzbeks had overrun, and in two years had re-conquered Herat and Merv. The same campaign carried the victorious Safavids as far north as Astarabad (Gorgan) and Balkh, though this last was wrested from them in 1600.

In several campaigns fought from 1603 to 1618, Abbas then reconquered most of what he had earlier ceded to the Ottomans. He crowned his military successes with the reconquest of Kandahar in 1622, lost to Akbar of the Mughal Empire in 1595. Abbas echoed his military achievements in other arenas as well,

ruling over a golden age of economic and artistic prosperity whose glory is showcased in Abbas's capital at Isfahan, now a World Heritage Site. Despite his successes, however, he too left

Above: *Agha Muhammad Khan Qajar, established the Qajar dynasty in 1794.*

Left: *In the Battle of Chaldiran the Ottoman Empire outnumbered the Safavid Empire, resulting in the Safavid's defeat. It was the beginning of 41 years of war between the two empires.*



## THE BATTLE OF CHALDIRAN

Ismail I had begun his rise to power as the leader of a Shi'ite religious group called the Qizilbash ("Red Heads") for their distinctively colored headgear and proclaimed Shia Islam the state religion. His success inspired Qizilbash revolts in Ottoman Anatolia, offering Selim I (see page 164) an opportunity for a campaign against the new shah. In 1514, he marched into northwestern Persia with a massive army. Ismail I, at a vast numerical disadvantage, burned the crops and supplies in the countryside, thus denying them to the cumbersome Ottoman army: the Persians would employ such scorched-earth tactics repeatedly in the years of warfare to come.

Unwisely, Ismail I decided to meet the army head-on at Chaldiran, a plain northeast of Lake Van, rather than in the mountains, and allowed the Ottomans to fully deploy their troops and—even more importantly, as it turned out—their cannon before attacking. With as many as 200,000 soldiers to as few as 40,000 (alternately, 120,000 to 70,000), the Ottomans tore the Persians to shreds, their cannon proving more than a match for Persian cavalry. Notable for its use of gunpowder in determining victory, the Battle of Chaldiran allowed Selim to take Tabriz, Armenia, and upper Mesopotamia; however, worried about his overextended line, he only occupied Tabriz for eight days and Ismail conquered Georgia in 1517.

Meanwhile, as early as 1510, he had secured the city of Merv in northeast Khorasan in a brilliant victory that nonetheless opened the second front in the ongoing Safavid wars against the



Below: *Tahmasp I was the longest-ruling Shah of Iran during the Safavid dynasty.*

his empire without a strong heir, and his reign proved to be the zenith of Safavid power before a long and rocky fall.



# THE RUSSO-PERSIAN WARS

A series of dynastic disputes and revolts throughout the central lands of Persia in the eighteenth century left the Qajar dynasty, which eventually emerged triumphant from the civil disruptions in 1794, vulnerable, not merely to the truculent Afghans (who had rebelled in 1709) and the shaky Ottoman Empire, but to a new and lasting threat, particularly in the Caucasus: Russia. As early as 1722, Peter the Great of Russia had made inroads there, taking Derbent, Baku, and Resht by 1723 and handing Tabriz, Kermanshah, and Hamadan to the Ottomans by treaty in 1724. For many decades these offenses were overlooked as Persia dealt with matters closer to its heart, but with the emergence of the Qajar dynasty the border regions became battlefields once again.

## SHIFTING ALLIANCES

In 1794, the first of the Qajar dynasty, Agha Mohammad Khan, took an army into the Caucasus and in a two-year campaign managed to re-conquer much of the lost territory, including the important city of Tiflis (Tbilisi). Struggling under the invasion, the king of Georgia—like Russia, Georgia was an Orthodox Christian kingdom—appealed to their northern neighbor for aid. Not until 1800, however, did Tsar Paul (r. 1796–1801) act; and when he did it was to annex the country outright. This was followed in 1801 by Paul's successor, Alexander I, declaring Georgia's complete incorporation. Notwithstanding the shadow cast by the Napoleonic wars (see pages 98–99), Great Britain and France both supported the Persians, seeking to prevent a complete Russian takeover of the region.

In 1804, Persian military support of anti-Russian rebels in the Caucasus precipitated a nine-year-long war, during which the Russians threatened Yerevan and seized Karabagh, Ganja, and northern Afghanistan. They might have gone farther had Napoleon's invasion of Russia not distracted them; even so, the Treaty of Gulistan, signed in 1813, awarded them everything north of the Aras River, save Yerevan and Nakhchivan.

The shah of Persia, Fath Ali Shah, viewed this result as inconclusive, and claimed the treaty allowed Persian suzerainty over three border regions, Derbent, Shirven, and Karabash. While negotiations heated up, Russian troops occupied the regions. Finally, in July 1826, the Persian crown prince, Abbas Mirza, led an army across the Aras River. By that September, the Persians had marched nearly to Tiflis. Thanks to revolts over Russian rule and poor Russian leadership, they regained control over Azerbaijan and parts of Armenia. At this point, however, the inept Russian commander was replaced with the competent Field Marshal Ivan Paskevich. On September 26, 1826, he handed Abbas Mirza a vicious defeat despite owning the inferior force, forcing the Persians back into Azerbaijan. The next major battle, at Echmiadzin (also known as Astarak or Oushakan) in August 1827, saw heavy Russian losses, so that Persians hailed it as a victory, but the Russian advance had not been halted.

The fortress at Sardarabad, Nakhchivan, and Yerevan fell in short order, followed swiftly by Tabriz. With his army deserting owing to a lack of pay and the Russians advancing to Tehran, the shah had little choice but to capitulate. The Treaty of Turkmanchai returned the Caucasus territories to Russia (to which were added Yerevan and Nakhchivan), leveled indemnity payments on Persia, and closed the Caspian Sea to the Persian navy. Never again would a Persian or Iranian nation exert direct control over the Caucasus.



Above: Paul I of Russia  
Left: The Persians won the Battle of Sultanabad in 1812 partly due to the fact that they vastly outnumbered the Russians. It was a minor victory, however, and the Russians ended up winning the invasion in the Battle of Aslanduz.



Field marshal Ivan Paskevich.

## THE LAST AFGHAN EMPIRE

Beginning in 1709, a series of uprisings in eastern and northeastern Persia shook Safavid control off of the Afghani population there and laid the foundation for the Durrani dynasty, sometimes called the last Afghan Empire. At its height under Ahman Shah Durrani, the Afghan Empire stretched from Mashhad to Delhi and from the Oxus River to the Arabian Sea. First to fall, in 1709, was Kandahar; next came Herat in 1716. In 1722, the Afghan governor of Kandahar conquered Isfahan, but Nadir Shah of the Safavids won the Battle of Damghan in 1729, Herat in 1732, Kandahar in 1738, and Delhi in 1739. These seemingly devastating setbacks did not outlast Nadir Shah's death, however, and in 1747 an Afghan cavalry chief henceforth named Ahmad Shah Durrani took control, by election, of Kandahar. Through diplomacy and force, he established the Durrani dynasty, pushing his country's borders to their maximum. The empire did not last long, however, beset by enemies from Persia, unsettled Afghan tribes, India, Russia, and Great Britain. Nevertheless, the empire, which had crumbled completely by 1879, birthed the modern nation of Afghanistan.



Above: Ahmad Shah Durrani, founder of the Durrani Empire, sitting at his Kabul palace.



# WORLD WAR I MIDDLE EAST

By 1914, the tottering Ottoman Empire had lost large amounts of its former territories, sometimes to internal rebellions, sometimes to foreign invasion, and sometimes to a combination of both. The ascendant British Empire had already started to insert tendrils of influence all over the wider Middle East region, first occupying and then claiming Egypt as a protectorate (in 1882 and 1914 respectively), involving itself in Persia, and claiming India as its own in 1876 (see page 223). As a result, when the Ottoman Empire joined the Triple Entente during the early days of World War I, Great Britain felt threatened. Not only did Britain worry that India's large Muslim population might rebel, but Egypt and the Suez Canal, crucial for shipping purposes, abutted Ottoman Palestine. Even more alarmingly, the oil refinery at Abadan (in modern Iran) supplied most of the oil for Britain's navy and lay exposed to Ottoman-held Mesopotamia.

Great Britain therefore launched a preemptive strike, occupying the port of Basra and the town of Kurna by the end of 1914. Commanded by Major General Charles Townshend, the small expeditionary force, which included many Indian soldiers, was sufficient for the immediate purpose, but the lure of Baghdad drew them into the Mesopotamian desert and a campaign that would last the length of the war.

## Lawrence of Arabia

One of World War I's most engaging figures, Thomas Edward Lawrence became an intelligence officer in the Middle East thanks largely to the Oxford-educated, Crusades-savvy scholar's knowledge of Arabic. In October 1916, as the British resumed their efforts in Mesopotamia and began campaigning in Palestine, Lawrence traveled to Mecca in the Hejaz Desert, where the sharif Husayn ibn 'Ali had begun leading a revolt against Ottoman rule. Lawrence perceived that aiding the Arabs in the Hejaz would both distract Ottoman efforts elsewhere and potentially cut the Damascus-Medina railroad, by which the Ottomans could rapidly send reinforcements against the revolt. Encouraged and guided by Lawrence, the Arabs won a remarkable victory at Aqaba on July 6, 1917, slashed the railroad, and prevented some 25,000 Ottoman soldiers from engaging the British forces elsewhere in the Middle East. Lawrence himself endured capture and torture for about a month in late 1917 but managed to escape, and was present when the Arabs won the Battle of Tafilah in January 1918 and at the capture of Damascus in October 1918.



## THE LURE OF BAGHDAD

Everywhere in the Middle East, but nowhere more so than in Mesopotamia, the rivers dictated the course of the campaigns. Although they offered a means of transportation and drinking water, the rivers also created mosquito-infested swamps and muddy morasses that impeded troop movement and spread disease—but they were still preferable to the desert, freezing at night and scorching during the day. The British advanced up the Tigris, reaching al-Amarah by June of 1915 and winning the Battle of Es Sinn on September 28 of that year, which allowed them to take the town of Kut-al-Amara, 128 miles away from the regional capital and former glory of the Abbasid Empire, Baghdad. At this point the overworked force made a final push but ran into surprisingly stiff resistance at the Battle of Ctesiphon in late November. Surprised and exhausted, the British lost more than half of their men and fled back to Kut, which was promptly besieged.

Attempts to relieve the siege failed and after enduring a horrific winter, Townshend surrendered on April 29, 1916, not long after the disastrous Allied attempt at Gallipoli came to a close (see page 99). The Ottomans, although they had failed to take the Suez Canal in February 1915, seemed triumphant.



Above: Observation balloons were widely used for intelligence gathering and artillery spotting, shown here with troops ready to make ascension over Mesopotamia. Troops from the Indian Empire were heavily relied on by the British in the Middle Eastern theater of World War I.

Left: This Gelatin silver print from 1915 shows Djemal Pasha on the shores of the Dead Sea. "Buyuk" (Great) Jamal Pasha, on the shore of the Dead Sea. Pasha, one-time Mayor of Baghdad, was a Turkish military leader who played an important role in the Balkan Wars and World War I. Far left: T.E. Lawrence.





## THE CAPTURE OF BAGHDAD

Nobody in the Allied command wanted to repeat the attempt on Gallipoli, but Mesopotamia offered an avenue that now, despite the siege of Kut, seemed feasible. General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude, a new and capable commander, prepared for a major campaign there first by reinventing Basra as a major transportation hub, building railroads, automotive roads, and docks for river transportation. Then in summer 1916, with a



160,000-man army (again mostly comprised of soldiers from India, where the feared Muslim uprising never occurred), he proceeded in carefully orchestrated stages up the Tigris.

The gradual, methodical advance proved to be a sounder strategy than Townshend's race towards Baghdad, and on February 22, 1917, the town of Kut-al-Amara changed hands again. Maude quickly took Ctesiphon as well, but his crowning victory was the capture of Baghdad, with no resistance—the Ottomans having already fallen back—on March 11, 1917. By the time Maude died of cholera on November 18, 1917, he had also captured ar-Ramadi and chased the Ottomans out of Tikrit, thus securing Mesopotamia for the Allies.

Maude's successor, Sir William Marshall, continued Maude's methods and pressed forward, taking Khan al-Baghdahi on the Euphrates and Kifri, Kirkuk, and Mosul on the Tigris. The British troops who marched into Mosul on November 3, 1918, could celebrate not only their success in the land between the rivers but also victory over the Ottoman Empire, which had formally surrendered four days earlier and thereby ceased to exist.

## THE CAMPAIGN IN PALESTINE

Early Ottoman attempts on the Suez Canal, in February 1915 and August 1916, though unsuccessful, proved that British fears about protecting Egypt were well founded. In late 1916 and

early 1917, the British went on the offensive, pushing into the Sinai Desert. A poorly planned attack on Gaza in April 1917 cost the British commander his job. He was replaced by the able Sir Edmund Allenby, who would be facing Erich von Falkenhayn, former chief of the German General Staff. A clever assault at three locations on the Entente line, Gaza, Beersheba, and Abu Hureira, allowed Allenby to break into Palestine and seize Jerusalem on December 9, an event of great symbolic and no little strategic significance.

As General Marshall pushed northwest through Mesopotamia, Allenby pushed north into the Transjordan, taking the ancient city of Jericho in February 1918 but failing to take Amman in April. The lines essentially stalled for the rest of the summer, but in September Allenby resumed his advance, taking Megiddo that month, Damascus on October 1 and Aleppo on October 26, four days before the Ottomans surrendered.

## Middle East Asunder

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the colonial interests of the British Empire, and the failures of the various peoples of the Middle East to present a united front resulted in widespread European involvement and management of the region, with lasting consequences. Arabian disillusionment with Great Britain, exacerbated by that country's professed willingness to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, combined with the possessive treatment of the whole area by Britain and France, led to a divergence of interests with the West that continues today. The borders drawn up by these foreign powers have also generated resentment and even wars, long after Great Britain and France abandoned the Middle East to its own devices in the middle of the twentieth century.

Above left: *Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude, Commander of the Tigris Corps (III Indian Army Corps), recaptured Kut in 1917 and captured Baghdad on March 11, 1917.*

Above: *Barely pausing for consolidation following the Battle of Mughar Ridge on November 13, 1917, British Commander-in-Chief Sir Edmund Allenby marched eastward toward Jerusalem via the Judea Hills.*



Left: *General Allenby enters Jerusalem on foot, 11 December 1917*



# THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS

Immediately upon the declaration of Israel's statehood, on May 14, 1948, the first in a long series of conflicts broke out between predominantly Jewish Israel and several surrounding, predominantly Muslim, Arab nations. Between 1948 and 1982, Israel and its neighbors engaged in no fewer than five major conflicts, with violence and tensions continuing unabated in the region today.

*Below: Nasser during the announcement of his nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956. In 1952, Nasser, along with Muhammad Naguib, led the Egyptian revolution overthrowing the monarchy of Egypt. He was president from 1956 until his death in 1970.*

## THE 1948 WAR

The British, who had controlled the area for decades, withdrew in 1948, exhausted by the continual fighting among the population. The United Nations proposed partitioning the country into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem a UN territory, but on the same day that Israel declared its independence forces from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan invaded (thus Israel calls the conflict the War of Independence). Jordanian troops managed to occupy Jerusalem, but it wasn't long before Israel surprised the world by throwing back the invasion, repulsing the far larger Arabian forces and seizing territory beyond the UN partition.

5, Jordan had invaded Israel, again reaching Jerusalem. But the Israelis threw them back, took Jerusalem, and forced the Jordanians to retreat past the West Bank, leaving Israel free to deal with Syria, still entrenched in the Golan Heights. On June 8, the Israeli army began shelling the heights; on June 9 they began ground operations. By June 10, Israel had seized Golan and ended the war, entering and winning it in less than a week.



*Above right: Israeli tanks at Golan Heights. When Israel captured this region and its principal city, Quneitra, on June 10, 1967, a ceasefire line dubbed "the Purple Line" was established. This line effectively became the new border between Israel and Syria.*

*Right: A trench and bunker of an Israeli Bar-Lev Line Fort, built at the Suez Canal.*

## THE SUEZ WAR

In 1956, Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser seized the Suez Canal, infuriating Britain and France. The two European nations colluded with Israel, hoping to regain control of the canal; meanwhile, Egypt had already declared itself committed to Israel's destruction, raised alarm by buying weapons from the Soviet Union, and blockaded the Israeli port of Elat. On October 29, 1956, Israel invaded Egypt. Parachute and armor troops performed nearly to perfection; by November 5, Israel had captured the Sinai. The United Nations intervened, halting the war; Egypt had lost badly, but regained control of the Sinai in exchange for allowing Israel use of the Straits of Tiran.

## THE SIX-DAY WAR

For ten years Israel and Egypt, bolstered by a UN buffer force in the Sinai, kept the peace. Then, in 1967, President Nasser moved troops into the Sinai and blocked the Tiran Straits while his Syrian allies started bombing Israel from the Golan Heights. Once again, Israel's military amazed the world. On June 5, 1967, Israel attacked, using aircraft and armor units so efficiently that by June 9 Egypt's air force had been devastated and it had lost first the Gaza Strip and then, again, the entire Sinai Peninsula. Meanwhile, also on June







Far left: October 7, 1973, Egyptian forces cross the Suez Canal during the Yom Kippur War.

Left: Israeli air strike at the Augusta Hospital located at the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem.

### THE YOM KIPPUR WAR

Several years of sporadic Egyptian raids and bombardment followed, reaching a climax on October 6, 1973—the High Holy Day of Yom Kippur in the Jewish calendar. Launching a surprise attack, at last Egypt and Syria were able to enjoy some success against Israel. Egyptian forces broke through the Bar Lev Line, a hundred-mile-long string of Israeli fortifications on the Suez Canal, while Syria attacked the Golan Heights. Egypt fielded 100,000 soldiers, 1,350 tanks, and 2,000 artillery, to Israel's 450 Bar Lev defenders; Syrian forces outnumbered Israeli by more than eight to one. Nevertheless, by October 10 Israel had recovered what it had lost in Golan and thrust into Syria proper, threatening Damascus. On October 14, Israel won the Battle of the Sinai and the following day effectively surrounded the Egyptian Third Army. A ceasefire followed on January 18, 1974; five years later, Egypt withdrew from its conflict with Israel altogether by signing the peace treaty known as the Camp David Accords.

### THREATENING FUTURE CONFLICTS

Despite Egypt's newfound neutrality, peace did not emerge. On June 5, 1982, Israel bombed Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, and on June 6 invaded. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) evacuated the city; after lengthy negotiations, Israel withdrew in 1985. In 1987, the intifada, violent riots by Palestinians seeking control of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, began. A peace settlement in 1993 failed to have lasting effects, with a second intifada in 2000. Over the following decade tensions continued to rise, with terrorist activity, expanding construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and an utter impasse over ownership of Jerusalem contributing to friction between Israelis and Palestinians. In 2011 Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas pressed for recognition of an independent Palestinian state in the United Nations, a move strongly opposed by Israel and its ally, the United States. Future conflicts in this troubled region unfortunately seem likely.

### Jerusalem

Considered holy by each of the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—Jerusalem occupies a unique place among the world's cities. Its strategic and defensible location, on hills near the Mediterranean shore, made it desirable even before it acquired religious significance. The area has been inhabited for some 5,000 years, with the first of many conquests of the city occurring in c. 996 BC. At that time King David conquered it with his Israelites, thus establishing the first Jewish kingdom and Jerusalem's earliest religious connotations. After that, in turn, the city was conquered by Assyria, Babylonia, the Seleucids, Rome, the Arabs, Western Crusaders, the Ayyubids, the Ottomans, and Great Britain—and, overriding UN protests, the Israelis during the Six-Day War, when they proclaimed Jerusalem their capital. Administration and ownership of this sacred city promises to be one of the most contested issues in any future peace processes in the Middle East.



Above: Yasser Arafat was Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, President of the Palestine National Authority, and leader of the Fatah political party. The cause of his death in 2004 is disputed.

Left: Ariel Sharon during the assault of Bar-Lev Line near Abu Ageila. Sharon went on to become Israel's eleventh Prime Minister in 2001.



# IRAN-IRAQ WAR

The friction in the Middle East in the second half of the twentieth century was not limited to the age-old conflict between Muslims and Jews, but also involved the equally ancient conflict between Sunni and Shia Muslims. Alarmed by the Islamic Revolution in Shia Iran, which Sunni President Saddam Hussein (from 1979 to 2003) feared would ignite the Shia majority in his own country, Saddam Hussein took the extraordinary measure of invading on September 22, 1980. Other considerations played into his decision as well, including territorial designs on the Shatt el-Arab, the river that combines the Tigris and Euphrates shortly before emptying into the Persian Gulf, and a desire to overtake Iran—which, having recently expunged many ranking military members during the revolution, seemed weak and divided—as the dominant Persian Gulf power.

Clockwise from left: *As part of a scorched earth military strategy, retreating Iraqi forces set more than 600 Kuwaiti oil wells on fire, causing both environmental and economic damage to Kuwait; Condemned for the brutality of his dictatorship, Saddam Hussein maintained power of Iraq through the Iran-Iraq War, ordered the invasion and looting of Kuwait in 1990, and was eventually captured in 2003 by a coalition of countries led by the U.S. and U.K.; Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, leader of Iran from 1979 to 1989; Estimates suggest that more than a million people died as a result of the Iran-Iraq war, and many more were injured or lost their home.*

## The Horrors of War

Both Iraq and Iran employed tactical methods that horrified observers: Saddam's use of chemical weapons against not only the Iranians but even against an ethnic segment of his own people, the Kurds, whom he believed were traitors, precipitated a formal charge from the United Nations against Iraq for having violated the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which forbade such weapons. With shocking disregard for human life, Iran employed men and boys as young as nine in "human-wave tactics," which threw large, densely packed numbers of barely trained civilians (called *basij*) into minefields, to clear the way for artillery, or against fortified positions, to draw fire. Reports of kidnapping victims appearing in such situations and of children tied together to prevent escape sickened the watching world. Other human-wave participants, however, went willingly, even bringing their own burial shrouds in the hope of dying a martyr's death.



## OPENING GAMBITS

Initially Saddam's plans seemed to bear almost perfect fruit. Launching massive air raids on Iran's well-protected airfields in an attempt to disable the Iranian air force, the Iraqis simultaneously struck across the Iranian border in three places, taking fortifications in Qasr-e Shirin, Mehran, and—in the main assault—Khuzistan in the south. The Iraqis met unexpectedly stiff resistance in Khorramshahr, which they captured on November 10, 1980, only after a grueling hand-to-hand fight, and they failed to take Abadan. Still, in the first few weeks of the war Saddam had achieved his stated territorial aim, although the uprising of the Arabian minority in Khuzistan he had expected to incite never materialized.

## THE WAR OF THE CITIES

The Iraqi troops dug in, but the Iranians, far from disintegrating into their competing factions as Saddam had hoped, united in the face of a common enemy and began counterattacking. An initial attempt failed, but in September 1981 the Iranians relieved the siege of Abadan, following up with successes near Qasr-e Shirin that winter. During spring 1982, beginning in March at Susangerd, Iran began to break through Iraq's lines: by May Iran had re-occupied most of its lost territory, including Khorramshahr. A failed Iranian assault on Basra in July 1982 signaled the beginning of the long war of attrition, fought along a mostly static front while both powers began bombing the other in a phase known as the "war of the cities."

In 1985, even as bombing intensified, Iran invaded the Al Faw Peninsula; the following year, Iraq briefly seized Mehran (again). In 1987 Iran took Mawat and Duayji but again failed to take Basra. In 1988 Iraq again intensified its air campaign, striking the Iranian capital Tehran repeatedly and reaching cities as far away as Kashan in a fairly successful attempt to discourage and disrupt the civilian population. In April 1988, Iraq reoccupied the Al Faw Peninsula.



Above: *Iran is infamous for its use of child soldiers during the Iran-Iraq War.*

## THE WAR OF THE TANKERS

Both nations relied heavily on oil exports, and both attacked the other's oilfields. As early as 1981 Saddam had declared the Persian Gulf a war zone and in 1984 the "war of the tankers" began, inevitably killing members of the international community, which increasingly put pressure on the combatants to end the war. In fact, Saddam had never ceased to press for peace, but thanks to the hatred for Saddam harbored by Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, it was not until their economy nearly buckled that Iran gave in. The casualty count is difficult to assess, with estimates from half a million to three times that, but certainly the war solved none of the issues that caused it.



# IRAQ WAR

Saddam Hussein had ruled Iraq since 1979 with ruthless authoritarianism. Determined to construct and head a pan-Arab, Sunni nation, Saddam waged several wars against his neighbors and violently repressed his own (majority Shia) citizens and made his anti-Western, anti-Israel stance clear. In 2003, U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair decided that the risk of Saddam unleashing weapons of mass destruction had become too high. In addition, according to Bush, Iraq harbored al-Qaeda terrorists, the group that had attacked the United States on September 11, 2001. On March 20, 2003, the American-British allies invaded.



*U.S. Navy guided missile destroyer, U.S.S. Porter, March 22, 2003*

## LIBERATION AND OCCUPATION

The combined assault toppled the hated regime with ease; the capital, Baghdad, and Al-Basrah fell on April 9; by April 14 the remaining strongholds of Saddam's Ba'ath Party—Kirkuk, Mosul, and Tikrit—had fallen as well. The first phase of the war—"Shock and Awe"—was over, with only about 150 American and British casualties. But the mission, as President Bush prematurely declared on May 1, had not been accomplished.

As in Afghanistan, coalition forces now found themselves trying to stitch together a bankrupt country that had been hobbled by its former regime and that still suffered from severe ethnic and sectarian differences. The democratic government formed in the wake of Saddam's removal soon showed itself incapable of overcoming these differences; meanwhile, the continued presence of American troops, evidence of torture at the now-infamous prisons of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, and misconduct by American-bought mercenaries had turned Iraqi sentiment wholly against the United States.

For the next eight years, the United States found itself mired in the middle of an expensive and deadly guerrilla war, fought between various Sunni and Shia paramilitary and terrorist groups, with no clear goals in sight. In 2007, President Bush sent an additional 21,000 troops to Iraq. The surge, as the move became known, did seem to repress some of the violence, but opinions are still divided as to its efficacy.



## THE STATE OF THE NATION

By the time the new American president, Barack Obama, pulled the last U.S. troops out of Iraq in December 2011, more than four thousand Americans and tens of thousands of Iraqis had died. From an American point of view, the war could hardly be viewed as satisfactory: no weapons of mass destruction were ever found, the violence plaguing the country offered more inroads to extreme political and religious groups than Saddam had, and the war had cost The United States much of its moral standing (and trillions of dollars). It remains to be seen whether Iraq can reassemble itself into a stable nation.

## Saddam's Wars

During his twenty-four-year "term" as president of Iraq, Saddam Hussein launched several wars as part of his attempt to establish hegemony over the Arab world and extinguish Shia Muslims. In 1980 he invaded Iran. In 1988, he embarked on the Anfal campaign against Kurdish Iraqis, slaughtering perhaps 100,000 (the highest estimate is 182,000) and destroying nearly all Kurdish towns and land. Two years later he invaded Kuwait; the United States intervened in 1991 and pushed him back in the First Gulf War. That same year he brutally repressed rebellions by Iraqi Shias and Kurds. For the Marsh Arabs' part in the rebellion, Saddam diverted the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates, draining the marshes and destroyed the single most precious resource sustaining the Arabs' 5,000-year-old culture. The act has been called the "ecological crime of the century;" fortunately, recovery efforts have yielded some positive results in recent years.

Above left: *U.S. Army Humvee, Baghdad, 2006. Iraqi insurgency primarily targeted Coalition forces.*



*Left: Tanks at Diwaniyeh in central Iraq, April 16, 2003.*









# 4

## CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN ASIA

For thousands of years, Central Asia has been the crossroads of great empires, from India, Persia, and China in the east, to Greece, Italy, and the rest of Europe in the west. Rich with fertile lands and natural resources, it has long been fought over for its innate wealth and trade routes.

The Indo-Europeans, whose linguistic descendants populated lands from Europe to India to southern China, conquered vast territories. This linguistic and cultural home to great European and Asian empires has been at the heart of conflict for centuries, and struggles in the region continue today.

Central Asia connects various corners of the globe. The Himalayas form an impenetrable wall between India and China, making the roads through the Hindu Kush invaluable trade routes; furthermore, those routes connect to western Asia, and therefore Europe. Many products and innovations have flowed westward across this channel, including spices, silk, paper-making technology, and even the stirrup, changing the course of history. The importance of South and Central Asia to global trade has had far-reaching implications. The desire of European traders to avoid the land-based trade route to India precipitated their discovery and colonization of the Americas. Providing religious and political motivations for the conflict in Afghanistan, the region is strategically important for the trade and distribution of oil, minerals, and other goods.



# VEDIC PERIOD

Among the great peoples of prehistoric Asia were the Indo-Iranians, also known as the Aryans. Originating in the steppe lands of Central Asia, the Indo-Iranians split into two groups around 2000 BC: one group spread west toward Sumer and Mesopotamia, and another group spread east into northern India. Like many other cultures that developed on the steppes of Asia, the Indo-Iranians relied heavily on their horses and are credited with bringing chariots to both Mesopotamia and northern India. Linguistically, Indo-Iranians represent one of the oldest Indo-European cultures, and the oldest texts from Vedic Sanskrit and Old Persian show remarkable similarities.



*This Finnish Axe-Hammer pendant symbolizes the weapon of the Finnish god of thunder.*



*Above: A terracotta male figurine from a series of figurines found in Mature Harappan sites*

## EASTERN EXPANSION

The eastern movement of Indo-Iranians quickly spread into the Hindu Kush region and pushed south. The superior military technology of the Indo-Iranians—particularly the use of chariots and archers—allowed them to conquer the native Dravidian population with relative ease. Dravidians either were assimilated into the new Aryan population, or they moved into the southern portion of the Indian subcontinent. The effects of this conquest can be seen even today in the linguistic makeup of India: most of the northern languages, including Hindi and Bengali, derive from Sanskrit, the oldest known version of Indo-Iranian, while India's southern languages, such as Telugu and Kannada demonstrate Dravidian roots.

## WARRIORS AND WEAPONS

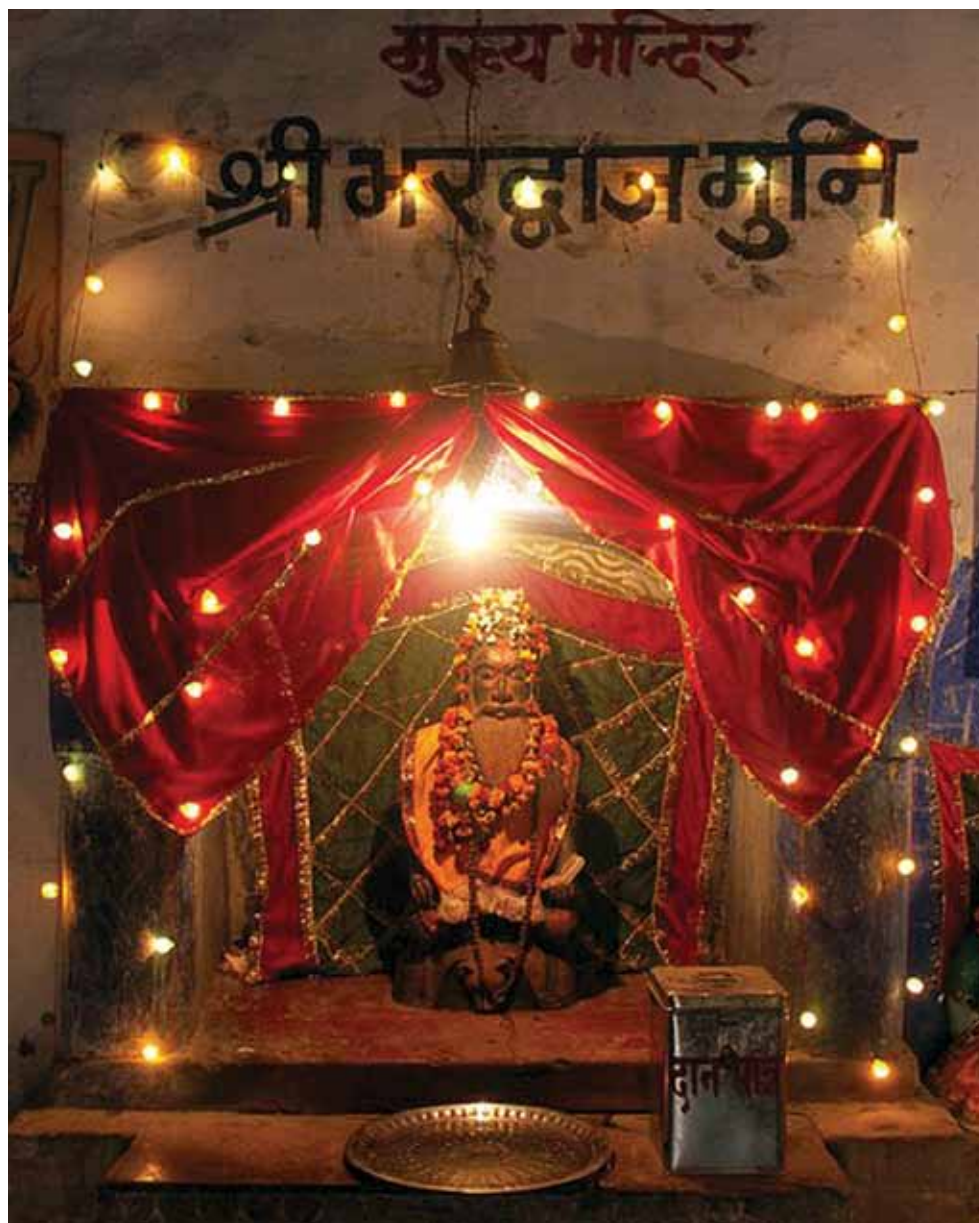
The Vedic Period is named for after the Vedas, ancient texts originally composed and passed down orally. There are four principal compilations of Vedic texts: the *Rigveda*, *Samaveda*,

*Yajurveda*, and *Atharaveda*. The *Rigveda*, for example, is considered the oldest and was probably written sometime in the second half of the second millennium BC. It contains numerous descriptions of battles. Most contain the supernatural feats associated with gods and mythological warriors, but they do make clear the prevalence and importance of the bow and arrow as the ultimate weapon. Although the Aryans also used spears, swords, and battle-axes, the bow and arrow seems to have been the real decider of victory. Warriors were even cremated together with their favorite bows and arrows. Unlike in western archery, the Aryan bow was drawn with the thumb to the ear rather than with three fingers to the chest. Early sources describe how the best archers could kill elephants or overturn chariots with a single shot.

## MILITARY MIGHT

When the Aryans began to press into northern India around 2000 BC, they met not with a people incapable of organization, but rather with one of the most advanced civilizations the world had seen to date. The Harappan urban civilizations of the Indus River Valley in northern India and Pakistan consisted of large cities built of baked mud bricks. Although uncertain, this network of cities in the fertile river valley may have been built and inhabited by a proto-Dravidian people. Analysis of animal imagery in the Indus River Valley civilizations shows that horses were unknown—or at least not used—before the beginning of the second millennium BC. This suggests that the Aryan use of horse and chariot may have been the deciding factor in their battles with the Dravidian peoples of northern India. Despite their advanced technology and use of bronze tools and weapons, the inhabitants of the Indus River Valley did not stand a chance against the speed and mobility of the powerful Aryan archers on their chariots.

*Below: Bharadwaja was one of the Seven Great Hindu Sages. He is the author of Ayurveda.*



“With the bow let us win cows, with the bow let us win the contest and violent battles with the bow. The bow ruins the enemy’s pleasure; with the bow let us conquer all the corners of the world.”

RIGVEDA 6.75



# THE FIRST INDIAN EMPIRE

Civilization on the Asian subcontinent of India dates from around 3300 BC, but until the Macedonian invasion of 326 BC, Indian kings, for the most part, ruled over many small, independent kingdoms. Just as the great Macedonian conqueror, Alexander the Great, reached the end of his conquests, however, a new force arose in India: Chandragupta, founder of the first great Indian empire.



## END OF MACEDONIAN RULE

When Alexander died at Babylon in 323 BC, leaving no heirs, his Indian possessions were full of discontented Macedonian soldiers and rebellious natives. Some officials had already been assassinated, executions very possibly orchestrated by Chandragupta himself or by the brilliant man who would become his prime minister, Kautilya. The son of a Maurya chieftain, Chandragupta, who studied strategy at Taxila, set about assembling a large army composed of Himalayan tribesmen and conquered Punjabi. Although both Indian and Greek sources declare unequivocally that Chandragupta was the genius behind the Indian revolution that ended Macedonian rule, no details survive.

## DEFEAT OF THE NANDAS

With the Macedonians checked for the moment, Chandragupta turned to the large kingdom of Magadha, which was ruled by the autocratic Nanda Dynasty. Again, details are slim, although sources indicate that Chandragupta invaded several times before besieging the capital, Pataliputra. Nanda fielded a large army, estimated at 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2,000 chariots, and 3,000 war elephants. Accounts suggest a particularly bloody struggle with heavy casualties. In the end, however, Chandragupta defeated the commander of the Nanda army, a man named Bhaddasala, and, after a few more battles, took control of the entire kingdom.

## CONQUERING THE SUBCONTINENT

One of Alexander's auspicious successors, Seleucus, was an accomplished general who wished to reconquer the territory lost to Chandragupta. Greek sources are suspiciously silent on ensuing events, but results—Chandragupta kept not only Punjab, but added to his realm Sindh, Kandahar, and Kabul, and parts of Herat and Baluchistan—suggest that the Macedonians suffered a massive defeat. Seleucus received 500 war elephants, but Chandragupta's empire now stretched to Persia.

The energetic emperor and his crafty adviser Kautilya—whose treatise on governance is compared regularly to Machiavelli, on the one hand, to Aristotle and Plato on the other—now turned south. With an army numbering 600,000, according to Plutarch, Chandragupta marched on until, at his death, his empire covered nearly the entire subcontinent. He left an enormous legacy, establishing for the first time in India's history a national army and administrative system as well as one of the world's earliest secret espionage bureaus. Legend has it that Kautilya converted to Jainism and fasted to death at Shravana Belgola (in modern Karnataka, India).



*Seleucus I was a prominent officer in Alexander the Great's League of Corinth. He was the founder of Seleucid Empire.*

*Left: This map shows the Mauryan Empire at its height in 265 BC, when Ashoka the Great extended the Empire into Kalinga during the Kalinga War.*

*Below: This page from the epic Mahabharata shows Arjuna and Bhishma charging at each other in their war chariots.*



*Right: The Macedonians suffered a massive defeat at the hands of Seleucus, after which he received 500 war elephants.*



# WAR ELEPHANTS

Judging from a Mesopotamian artifact more than 4,000 years old, humans learned to ride elephants and horses at about the same time—although elephants, of course, have never been tamed or domesticated as horses and other animals have. Some early societies, notably Egypt, hunted their elephant populations to extinction, but others, primarily on the Indian subcontinent, trained these massive beasts, the largest of all land animals, for war.

## INSTILLING FEAR

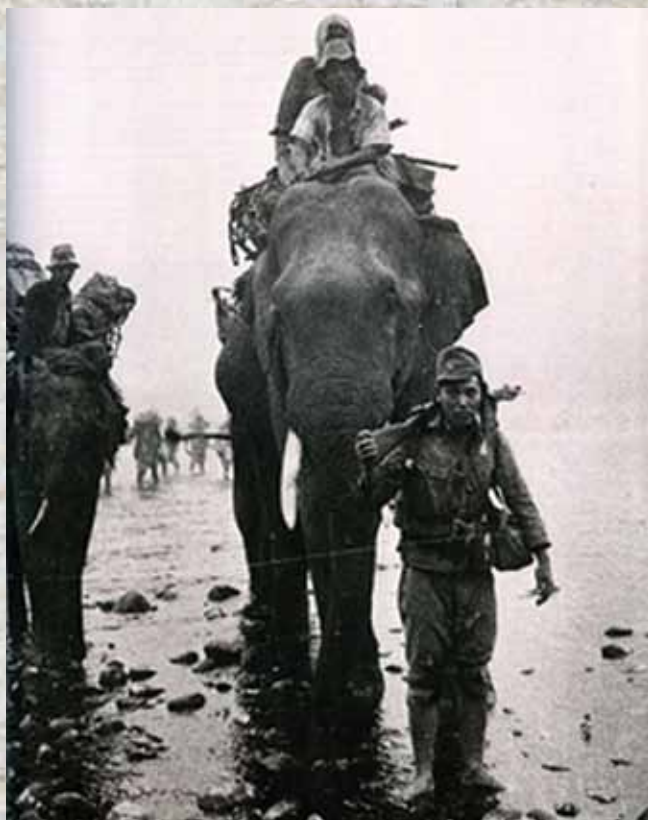
Beginning around the first millennium BC, armies regularly used contingents of war elephants in battle. Several archers could perch on the back of one, and its naturally thick hide gave it decent protection. A charging elephant could ruin military formations and trample scores of enemies. Elephants had a distinct advantage over horses, sometimes succeeding in panicking enemy cavalry without ever having to join the battle. It did not take many elephants to carry the day (Hannibal, for instance, terrorized Rome with only twenty-four).

Early Aryan society did not yet have war elephants, but in Vedic times it seems that elephants were used for a number of purposes on the battlefield. Elephants could clear paths out in front of the armies, they could carry princes into battle, they could break the ranks of enemy troops, and they could trample and crush just about anyone or anything. Over time elephants became a staple of Indian warfare almost as essential as the chariot and archer. They became particularly important as the numbers of infantry increased, since the charging elephant could easily break formations of marching foot soldiers.



Left: This Flemish tapestry depicts the battle of Guagamela, which took place in 331 BC between Alexander the Great and Darius III of Persia. The Persians, who were soundly defeated, utilized 15 war elephants.

Opposite: Carthaginian war elephants attack Roman infantry at the Battle of Zama in 202 BC, a battle that marked the end of the Second Punic War. Legendary Carthaginian leader Hannibal had eighty war elephants at his disposal, yet was still defeated by the Romans, under the leadership of Scipio Africanus.



Left: A photograph of Japanese troops riding on elephants in 1944, during the Burma Campaign in World War II.





## RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

In ancient India, there were rules of engagement in war as to who could take on whom. Fighting was supposed to be on equal ground, and war elephants were supposed to fight against other war elephants. Female elephants could not be used in war because they will run from male elephants in battle. Elephants were used with increasing frequency as their effectiveness was proven. Alexander the Great was immensely impressed with the use of elephants in the Persian army in 331 BC in the Battle of Gaugamela. He won the battle and incorporated the elephants into his own forces, only to expand their ranks later as he continued to push east. Over time, the number of elephants used in war grew considerably, and Alexander's progress into India was halted in part because of the hundreds of war elephants that would have been used against him and his men were he to continue his onslaught eastward.

## AN ARMY OF ELEPHANTS

Elephants require significant infrastructure to be used in battle. They need to be tamed and trained, and require significant amounts of food for sustenance. Elephants consume between 300 and 600 pounds of vegetable matter per day. To

maintain an army of hundreds or thousands of elephants, therefore, would have been incredibly expensive, particularly when traveling.

Combating elephants in battle involved either other elephants or more crafty maneuvers. In ancient India, it is said that the best archers could kill an elephant with a single shot. While this is possible—and a feat performed even by modern archers today—performing such a heroic deed would have been extremely difficult during the chaos of battle. Because they are such large animals, with thick skins and large hearts, even a direct shot to the heart will likely not kill an elephant immediately, and he will have the chance to do significant damage in his death throws before succumbing. And anyone who has read George Orwell's famous *Shooting An Elephant* knows that shooting an elephant directly in the head is ineffective because of their incredibly thick skulls. A shot behind the ears is far more effective for reaching the brain immediately.

Elephants continued to be used in battle for centuries and are still tamed and maintained throughout South Asia today. They are important symbols of wealth and power. The ivory trade and poaching, however, as well as habitat destruction have put many species of elephant in jeopardy.





# THE GUPTA DYNASTY

Remembered as a golden age of flourishing art, literature, learning, and Hinduism, the Gupta Dynasty of India started and ended in bloodshed. It began in AD 320 with a local raja (king) named Chandragupta I, grandson of the first Gupta leader and based in Magadha (not to be confused with the earlier Chandragupta, founder of the Mauryan Empire). The early years of the Gupta Dynasty are shrouded in mystery. It is known that Chandragupta led several campaigns in and around his territory, conquering Prayaga (Allahabad), Saketa (Ayodhya), and Nepal; he may have forcibly taken Pataliputra for his capital.



*Terracotta bust of an Indian man's head, from northern India during the Kushan or Gupta Dynasty.*

## CONQUEST AND EXPANSION

Chandragupta I reigned until c. 330, when his son Samudragupta took over and began the most extensive series of conquests of the entire dynasty, establishing firmer control over his own territory than his father had, combating a contentious Kota king and conquering the Nagas, kingdoms with capitals at Ahichatra (near modern Ramnagar), Champavati (near Narwar), and Mathura.

The second phase of Samudragupta's conquest is even more remarkable. He brought his armies from Pataliputra as far south as Kāñchi (modern Kanchipuram), and although a court official's ancient inscription on Ashoka's pillar gives us the names of the southern kingdoms, and the order in which Samudragupta conquered them, their locations are known only vaguely. It can be said that the emperor marched through what is modern Madhya Pradesh across the eastern Deccan to Kanchipuram (Pallava). No fewer than twelve kingdoms appear on Harishena's list, although Samudragupta seems to have followed an interesting pattern in establishing his influence over the south: he met the kings in battle, captured them, then released them to serve him, loosely, as vassals.

Upon returning home Samudragupta confronted still more rebellions; yet he also continued to expand, conquering Aryavarta, parts of the Punjab, and parts of Rajasthan. His son Chandragupta II (380–415) pushed all the way to the Arabian Sea, conquering the Saka (Scythian) territories of Malwa, Gujarat, and Kathiawar.

## DECLINE AND FALL

The reign of Chandragupta II, in particular, is remembered as a golden age, but the empire's end was already at hand. Nomadic tribesmen called Hephthalites or Hunas, probably related to the Huns (see pages 120–121), began to invade the northwest. Following a full-scale invasion in AD 480, Gupta territory began to shrink, becoming significantly smaller by 520 and disappearing entirely a generation or two later.



*Above: A gold coin from the Gupta era, depicting the Gupta king Kumaragupta fighting a lion.*



*Right: This map shows the extent of the Gupta Dynasty at its height around AD 450. *volore, consed excessi tatiam.**



*Right: A terracotta relief from northwest India, during the Gupta period, 5th-6th century, showing a scene from the epic Rāmāyana.*

*Below right: The dharmapala (defender of the law) Hayagriva and his consort.*



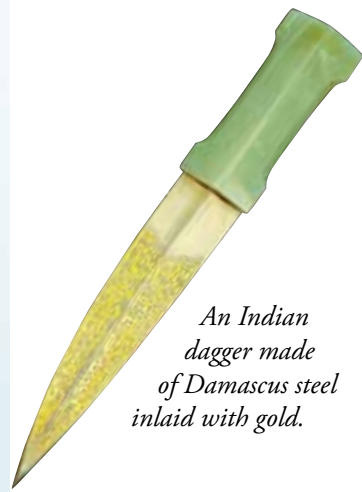
*Above: Gopala is the child form of Lord Krishna, the cowherd boy whose divine flute-playing enchanted the cowheard maidens. Gopala is Sanskrit for "Sustainer of cows."*





# PALA EMPIRE

In AD 750, a ruler named Gopala established the Pala Dynasty in the Bengal region of eastern India. The new power emerged out of smaller competing entities. After defeating attacks from the west, the Pala Kingdom emerged under the leadership of Gopala, who ruled from 750 to 770. He was succeeded by his son, Dharmapala (770–810) and Devapala (810–850), who, during their long reigns, vigorously expanded the territorial domain of the empire through military prowess and strategic execution. At its height, the Pala Empire stretched from the hills of Afghanistan in the north to the far south of the Indian Subcontinent, west to the Indian Ocean and east throughout Bengal and into Southeast Asia.



*An Indian dagger made of Damascus steel inlaid with gold.*



Above: *The ruins of a Buddhist Vihara (monastery). Somapura Mahavihara is the greatest Buddhist Vihara in the Indian subcontinent. It was built by Dharmapala of Bengal; it became a World Heritage Site in 1985.*

Below: *The Gopala Krishnaswamy Temple in Timmalapura, Bellary district, Karnataka state, India was constructed in AD 1539 by a local chief during the rule of King Achyuta Raya of the Vijayanagara Empire.*



## Damascus Steel

A prized weapon of the time may have been made from high-quality patterned steel, now known as “Damascus steel.” While modern Damascus steel often refers to a process of pattern welding, recent research has shown that the original Damascus (or *wootz Damascus*) steel was produced from the correct balance of impurities in the steel that resulted in the swirling patterns of high- and low-carbon steel characteristic of wootz blades. The combination of grades of steel gave weapons of this type hard, razor-sharp edges with the flexibility and softness to absorb blows. The technique of making wootz was eventually lost.

## ADVANCED TECHNIQUES OF WAR

Despite the lateness of the period, chariots were still used effectively as military engines of war. The horses of the Bengal homeland of the Palas were shorter and smaller than those that came from the steppes and mountainous regions to the north, and were thus better suited to drawing the cumbersome chariots of old. The army, which some accounts put in the hundreds of thousands of soldiers, was comprised of chariots, cavalry, war elephants, and foot soldiers carrying spears, swords, and shields. The prized cavalry came from the northern regions of the kingdom, from present-day Afghanistan, where a strong tradition of horse breeding had developed specifically for mounted warriors.

The Pala used advanced techniques of warfare to handle the different terrains of their empire, as well as the different tactical missions of expansion, from taking cities to open battle. The weaponry was typical for the time, consisting of bows and arrows, swords, and spears. The Pala also wore strong, custom-made armor that was fashioned from plates and conical-shaped helmets.

## THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

The Pala Empire was Buddhist by religion, but was very tolerant of other religions practiced in its borders. Pala missionaries were responsible for bringing Buddhism to Tibet and firmly establishing its presence there. The Sena Dynasty, started by Hemantasena, succeeded the empire. The Sena, whose name means “army” in Sanskrit, were a southern people who paid tribute to the Bengali court of Pala. In 1095, Hemantasena seized power from the Pala Dynasty, which had ruled for nearly 350 years. At around the same time, halfway across the globe, William the Conqueror vanquished England after his victory at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The Pala continued to hold certain territories and power until 1174.



# THE GRECO-BACTRIAN KINGDOM

After Alexander the Great died, the eastern portion of his empire came under the control of the Seleucids. The Seleucid Empire stretched from the eastern Mediterranean all the way to the Hindu Kush, including the fertile lands of Southwest Asia. Among the Satrapies of the Seleucid Empire was Bactria, a land of opulence and power. Around 250 BC (no one knows the exact date), Diodotus, ruler of Bactria, seceded from the Seleucid Empire and established an independent Bactrian Kingdom.

## THE SELEUCID EMPIRE

Diodotus I was succeeded by his son, Diodotus II, who was in turn overthrown by Euthydemus. Meanwhile, Antiochus III had taken power in the Seleucid Empire. Antiochus III was an exceptional leader and strategist and fought vigorously to strengthen the Seleucid Empire. After suffering a defeat in Egypt, Antiochus directed his efforts against Euthydemus of Bactria, defeating him at the Battle of the Arius in 208 BC, and laying siege to his citadel for three years. Despite his victory over Euthydemus of Bactria, Antiochus continued to recognize the independence of the Bactrian state and even offered his own daughter to Euthydemus as a pledge.

## LAND OF A THOUSAND CITIES

The Greco-Bactrian kingdom was Hellenic by language and culture, and spread its influence eastward into India and China. Bactrian merchants would travel to India to trade, and would procure goods from both India and China there. The Bactrian kingdom was itself known as the "land of a thousand cities," and grew in wealth as it oversaw the trade routes connecting the Mediterranean with India and China.

Right: *Maitreya is a future Buddha of this world. In Buddhist tradition, it is foretold that Maitreya will be the fifth Buddha of the present eon, and that his coming will occur once the teachings of the current Gautama Buddha are less influential.*



*A Gandhara stone palette from the first century AD, depicting a Yuezhi king and attendants.*

## ARMED FOR BATTLE

Bactrians used straight swords that tapered to a point and were almost triangular in shape. For constructing their weapons, they used alloys such as bronze and even had some iron and steel, though it would have been rare and expensive.

The Bactrians' stylized, Hellenic helmets can be seen depicted on coins and in statues. They organized their military in phalanxes, groups of warriors in lines who formed a solid wall of shields and spears. Bactrians also employed peltasts for attacking with stones and javelins, and a strong cavalry.

Most would have been lightly armed, although some cavalry and infantry would have been heavily armed (defensively as well as offensively). They had cuirasses or thoraxes, cuisses, greaves, and tall spiked helmets, as well as round or oval shields, likely of iron and leather. While we have to rely on numismatic evidence and other artistic depictions of warriors of the time, there are some finds of actual armor, such as from Kampyr Tempe, which suggest that Bactrians used round breastplates.

As time wore on, the Bactrian kingdom became threatened by the Scythians and peoples displaced from China and elsewhere, including a people known as the Yuezhi.

The Yuezhi, it is believed, were actually an Indo-European people who had settled far east of their Indo-European homeland, all the way in western China. The Yuezhi eventually took over the Bactrian realm and went on to found the Kushan Empire.



Left: *Apamea (shown here in ruins) was a treasure city of the Seleucid Empire. It was formed when the city of Pharmake was fortified and enlarged by Seleucus I Nicator in 300 BC, who then renamed the city named it after his wife, Apama.*

Below: *This early 5th-century mug from Attica shows a peltast fighting a panther. Peltasts were a type of Ancient Greek Light Infantry.*





# THE KUSHAN EMPIRE

The Kushan Empire grew out of the displaced Yuezhi populations, which had been pushed south and west out of China into the then Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. Although we cannot be certain of their exact heritage or linguistic makeup, it is believed that the Yuezhi actually spoke a variant of Tocharian, an Indo-European language spoken in the Tarim Basin of southwestern China until around the ninth century. Thanks to the dry climate of the Tarim Basin, paper and wood manuscripts spanning several centuries have been surprisingly well preserved, affording some insight into the Tocharian language and culture. The origins and makeup of the Yuezhi population is uncertain because there is too little evidence from the period.



*An example of skulls reshaped by head-deformation, which was commonly practiced in the Kushan empire.*



*Above: Kanishka the Great inaugurates Mahyana Buddhism.*

## EASTWARD EXPANSION

The Kushan first established a foothold in Bactria, before spreading east into the Hindu Kush, establishing an empire that eventually encompassed sizeable portions of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern India. The Kushan were largely a Buddhist people, although there is evidence of various Greek and Iranian deities being worshiped within the realm in a type of syncretism common in ancient cultures. The most famed Kushan leader was Kanishka, c. AD 127, who is praised as an advocate of Buddhism and who sought to control the trade routes between India and western Asia and Europe. Much of the wealth of the Kushan Empire grew out of their control over trade routes. For roughly 300 years, Kanishka's reign was used as a calendar marker in the region.

## NOMADS TURNED SETTLERS

The Kushan were originally a nomadic people, so they valued the horse in their culture and in their warfare. Like the Scythians and other nomads of the steppes, the Kushan practiced horse archery, and used short bows on horseback to devastating effect. Combining the range of the bow with the mobility of the horse, the Kushan were able to conquer and defend large territories not only of steppe land, but also in the hills, mountains, and forests. The Kushan were heavily influenced by Hellenic traditions and probably absorbed many military practices of the Greco-Bactrians into their own

warfare.

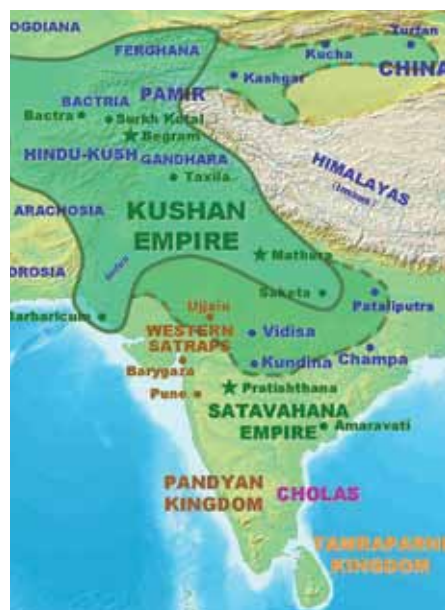
Despite their nomadic origins, the Kushan evolved into a settled people, gradually becoming entrenched in the lands that made up their empire. They built elevated walled fortresses for defense of the kingdom. Their weaponry consisted of—in addition to the short bows used on horseback—straight swords almost triangular in shape (similar to those used by their predecessors in the region, the Greco-Bactrians), long pointed daggers, and spears. Their defensive weaponry included oval-shaped shields and even plate armor.

The Kushan Empire eventually split in AD 225 and the western region was taken over by the Sassanids.

## Head Deformation

As can be seen in numismatic evidence of the time, the Kushan practiced head deformation, whereby a band was wrapped tightly around the skull to deform the bone and give the head an entirely artificial shape over time.

*Below: Kanishka the Great coin found in Abinposh, Afghanistan. The reverse side of a gold coin of Huviskka, depicting the Kushan deity Mahasena.*



*Left: Kushan territories (full line) and maximum extent of Kushan dominions under Kanishka (dotted line).*



# THE GOLDEN HORDE

The Golden Horde is the name of the westernmost portion of the Mongol Empire, which eventually split off after several controversies and disputes over succession to Genghis Khan. The Golden Horde was the portion of the empire that fell to Genghis's eldest son, Jochi, and reached its height of power under the incredible military leader Batu.

## A Signature Weapon

Mongolian bows were made of a composite of wood, horn, sinew, and other materials. Short and powerful, the recurve shape of the bows and the use of horn to give stability while maintaining flexibility, allowed stronger penetration with lower draw weights, since the weight of a bow's draw was applied over a longer distance during release of the arrow.

## SUCCESSION AND INFIGHTING

Before his death in 1227, Genghis Khan divided the Mongol Empire among his sons. Jochi took the westernmost part, the Golden Horde. The region was still part of a unified Mongol Empire, which reached its height in the later thirteenth century before fragmenting over disputes of succession among Genghis's grandchildren.

Jochi died before Genghis, and Jochi's son Batu took control. After fighting in the Mongol-Jin war in the east, Batu turned his efforts to expanding the Mongol Empire westward across Russia and into Europe, reaching as far west as Poland and Hungary, which he attacked in 1241. Alexander Nevsky, the famous Russian ruler, became grand prince of Vladimir thanks, in part, to his relationship with Batu, whom he served as vassal. Nevsky knew it was pointless to go up against the larger, stronger Mongolian opponent, so he maintained strong ties with the Mongols.



*Batu Khan's statue in the Mongolian Palace in Gachhuurt, Mongolia. Batu Khan was the grandson of Genghis Khan, and founder of the Golden Horde.*

Eventually Batu abandoned his westward progress to return east to focus on the struggle over succession to the empire. This infighting shortened the lifespan of the Mongol Empire, even while it was at the height of its expanse. The territories continued to be subject to Mongol rule, even though the empire itself has broken apart.

## A BRUTAL, TERRIFYING FORCE

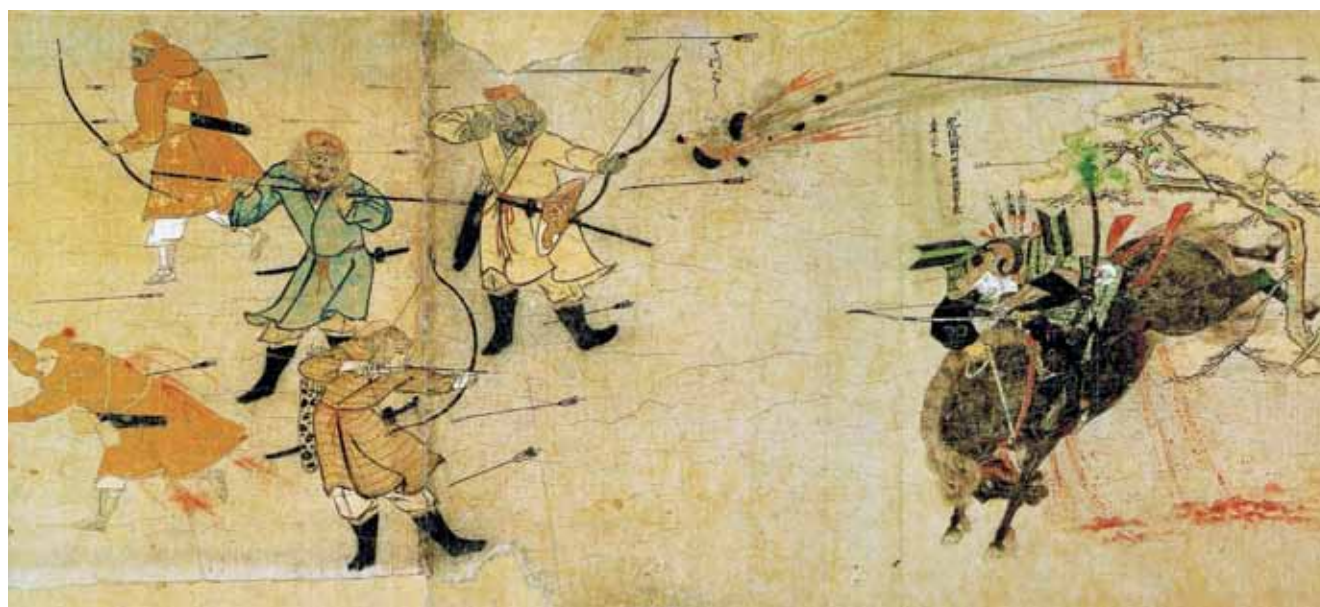
By the time the Golden Horde led its forces against the Rus and westward through Hungary, Poland, and modern-day Austria, the Mongols were not only an experienced, and terrifying, force of horse archers, but also brilliant military strategists, capable of defeating armies in open battle or crushing cities through siege. The Mongols made brutal use of whatever they captured, often sparing builders and engineers to help rebuild ransacked cities or construct siege weapons that would be used against their kinsman elsewhere. They also used captives as human shields in attacks and in breaching walls. While Mongolian horses were smaller and slower than the chargers bred in Europe to carry heavily armed knights, the lightness of Mongol cavalry often afforded them the tactical advantages of speed and maneuverability that their European opponents did not have.

Not bound by the conventions of Western warfare, the Mongols saw no shame in distancing their strategists from the front lines of battle, nor did they put a moratorium on any attacks during the cold blight of winter. In attacking the Rus, Mongols even used the flat expanses of frozen rivers as roads in wintertime.



*Above: Map of 13th-century Chagatai Khanate, showing the territorial extent of the Golden Horde.*

*Right: The Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba scrolls illustrate the Mongol invasion of Japan. The scrolls show images of battles between the Mongol invaders and Japanese defenders, on land and sea. This image depicts the samurai Suenaga under fire from Mongol arrows and bombs.*





# THE INVASION OF KHWARAZEMIA

The beginning of the thirteenth century saw land after land fall beneath the punishing hooves of the Mongol horsemen, who swept across Asia and into Europe like no other force had before. In a remarkably short span of time the Mongols established the largest contiguous empire the world has known, encompassing a landmass larger than the continent of Africa. Initiating these forays from the steppes was the great leader Genghis Khan.

## REPRISAL AND EXPANSION

In 1219 Genghis sent emissaries to the Khwarazmian Kingdom, but they were captured and killed rather than received as guests. Outraged, the Mongols led a massive attack against Khwarazmia. The invasion, which significantly expanded the Mongol Empire into the Southwest Asia, also contributed to several disputes over succession within the Mongol Empire. At the time, Khwarazmia encompassed most of modern-day Iran, the eastern region of the Caspian Sea, parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan, and southern Uzbekistan.



Above: *Ghengis Khan was the founder and emperor of the Mongol Empire—the largest contiguous empire in history. His grandson, Batu, founded the Golden Horde.*

Having been told he would receive the capital city of Khwarazmia, Gurganj, upon its defeat, Genghis's eldest son, Jochi, sought to negotiate a peaceful surrender. As negotiations dragged on, however, Jochi's younger brother Chagatai grew impatient and criticized the inaction of his brother, advocating direct attack. Genghis eventually put their third brother, Ögedei, in charge. Ögedei sacked and burned the city to the ground with shocking brutality and force. Genghis would soon appoint Ögedei as his successor in an effort to keep the Mongol Empire united. The efforts, however, proved futile.

## HUMAN QUARRY

The Mongols were originally horse archers who developed their military abilities by hunting on the steppes. Circling wide around their quarry, they would eventually close the noose and shoot down on their prey from horseback, leaving no room for escape. The Mongols excelled at adapting these hunting tactics to the battlefield, where each soldier on the ground became quarry. But the Mongols quickly learned to adapt to different styles of warfare, and their fearlessness and brutality allowed them to besiege cities with devastating force, wielding siege weapons, but still relying on the swiftness of their horses to encircle their enemies and cut off all hope of escape. The Mongols used light lamellar armor, with armies mostly comprised of light cavalry with a mixture of lancers.

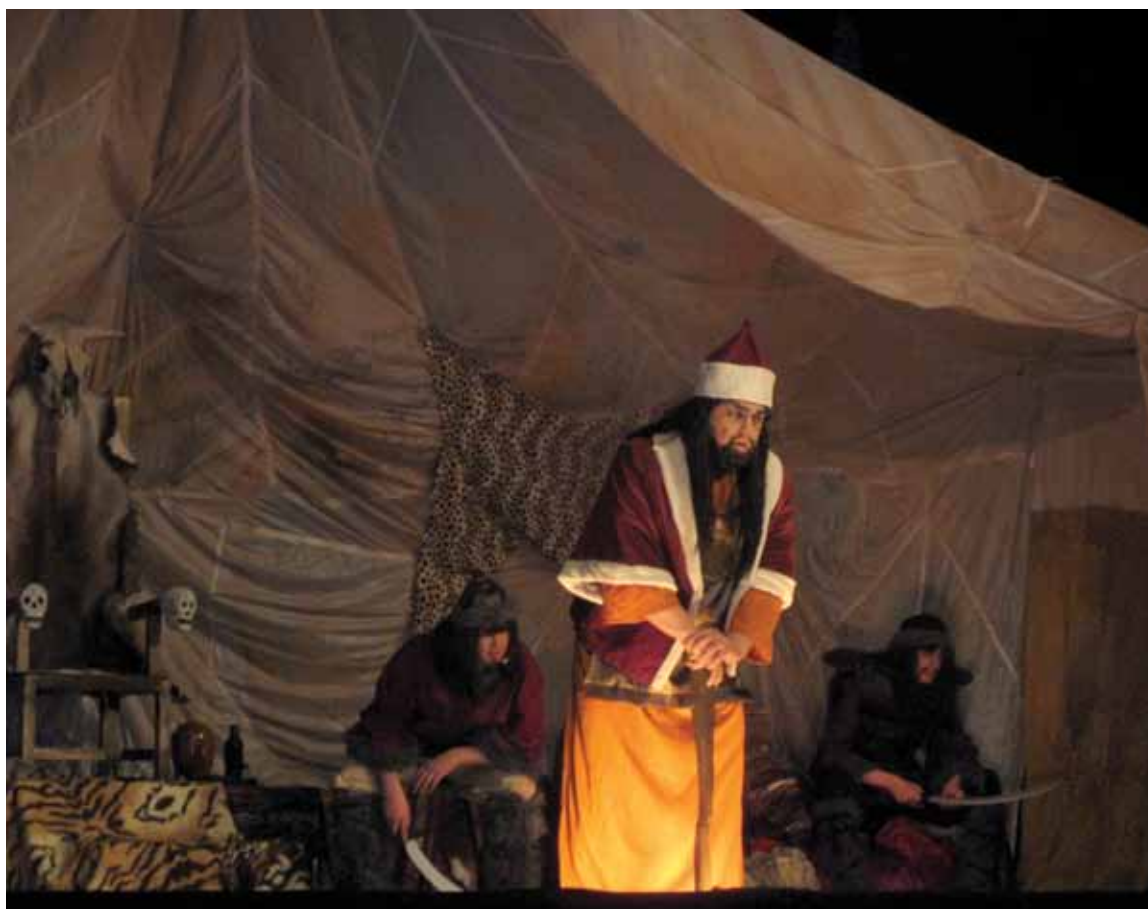
The Mongol sack of Khwarezmia was significant not only because it dramatically expanded the Mongol Empire shortly before the death of Genghis Khan in 1227, but also because of the internal strife it later caused within the Mongol Hordes about who would take the place of Genghis.

## Modern Horse Archery

Modern practitioners of horse archery give us a sense of how powerful a single mounted archer can be. The Hungarian horse archer Kassai Lajos has set numerous world records and is capable of shooting up to ten arrows in just twelve seconds. In 2006 Kassai shot continuously from horseback for a twenty-four-hour period, firing over 5,400 arrows, most of which found their mark. When considering that the entire male population of the Central Asian nomadic peoples could be quickly mobilized for war—and were all accustomed to riding in formation—it is little wonder that they were able to besiege kingdoms with such force.

Below: *Scene from act 1 of the classic student “spex”, or farce, Djingis Khan, which has played every five years for the last 125 years in Lund, Sweden.*

Below: *The Mongols were expert archers on horseback, who honed their bowman skills on the Mongolian Steppes.*





# MOGUL EMPIRE

By the time Zahir-ud-din-Muhammad Babur led his army into the Punjab in 1526, northern India had witnessed centuries of Muslim conquest. The result was a mixed society of Indian Hindus and largely Shia Uzbek and Afghan Muslims (the Hindu Vijayanagar Empire defended the south from 1336 to 1646). Babur, a Sunni Chaghatai Turk, confronted Hindus and Shia Muslims on the battlefield. His army was small by comparison—12,000 to 80,000 at the Battle of Kanua in 1527—but Babur’s modern guns and superior tactics carried the day. A descendant of Timur and Genghis Khan, Babur (1526 to 1530) founded the Mogul Empire.



Above: *A modern-day horse archer practicing his skills.*

### Hindus and Muslims

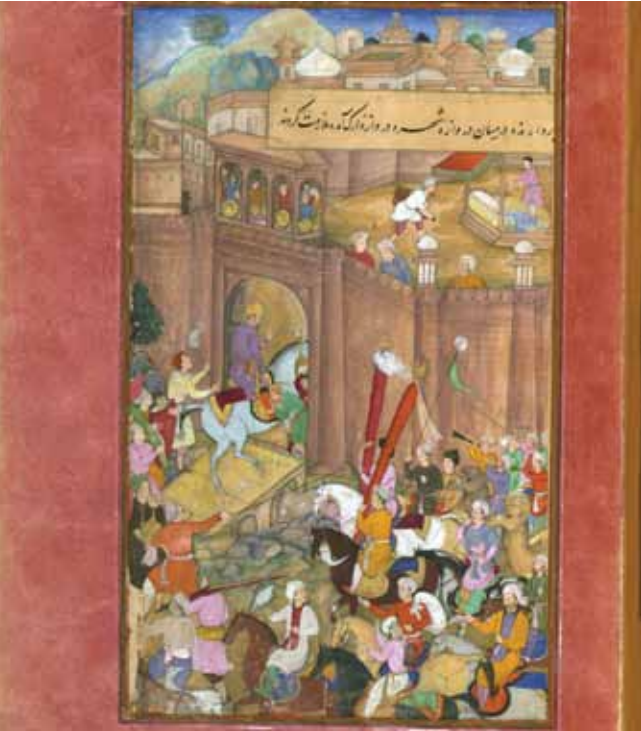
Akbar and his son Jahangir crafted deft administrative policies, including toleration and inclusion of Hindus, that knit the empire together. Aurangzeb (1658–1707), though a capable military strategist who extended the empire’s borders, lacked his predecessors’ wisdom, repressing the Hindu population with policies like the jizya, a poll tax on all non-Muslims. Unsurprisingly, his pugnacious stance, coming on top of years of Muslim domination, provoked rebellions, the most successful led by Shivaji, whose homeland of Bijapur was overrun by Aurangzeb in 1686 to 1687. Shivaji managed to reclaim a considerable amount of territory from the Moguls and, on one occasion, made a daring, now legendary escape from the Mogul capital at Agra. He crowned himself in 1674 as an independent sovereign. Strikingly, his Maratha kingdom insisted on religious tolerance.

### AKBAR THE GREAT

Babur’s son Humayun, beset by such enemies as Sher Khan in Bihar and Bengal and his own brother in Kabul and the Punjab, nearly lost the empire; Humayun’s son, Akbar, in contrast, brought his father’s dominion to a cultural zenith. Hemu, an Afghan general of the rebelling Sur Dynasty—which had chased Humayun to Persia—marched on Delhi in 1556, forcing the teenaged Akbar to oppose him with a much smaller army. Fate caught up with Hemu at the Second Battle of Panipat, a turning point in Indian history: Hemu, who had been winning, was struck by a stray arrow and, thus incapacitated, was defeated. Akbar’s armies sought and

destroyed the remaining Surs over the next two years, until Akbar controlled all Hindustan.

By 1564, Akbar had added Malwa and Gondwana (thenceforth attached to Malwa) and seized the fortress of Chunar in the east, where his father had clashed with Sher Khan years before. By then, a major Uzbek rebellion was stirring, with entire provinces—notably Malwa—in revolt. Akbar’s brutal suppression of the revolt did not prevent him from further expanding his empire, conquering Mewar in 1567 and the rest of Rajasthan in 1569. Taking advantage of civil war in Gujarat, whose ports offered lucrative access to the Gulf of Arabia, Akbar invaded in 1572, quickly seizing the province. Bengal, to which Akbar sent armed forces as early as 1566, fell in 1576. He reestablished control of Kabul, his ancestral homeland, in the 1590s, and was victorious at Kandahar against the Safavid Persians in 1595. By the time he died in 1605, the Mogul Empire was large, prosperous, and stable.



Right: *Babur entering Kabul.*

Timeline	
1526–1530	reign of Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur (Chaghatai Turk, Sunni): invades Lodi Punjab from Kabul
1526	First Battle of Panipat (near Delhi): 12,000 army led by Babur defeats larger Lodi (Delhi Sultan Ibrahim Lodi) army thanks to gunpowder
1526	Babur establishes capital at Agra
1527	Battle of Kanua: Babur defeats Rana Sanga, ruler of Mewar in Rajasthan and head of Rajput confederacy (Rajput forces: 80,000 cavalry + 500 armored war elephants; Moguls—much smaller force but still with the guns)
1528	Babur defeats major Rajput fortress of Chandiri
1530	Babur’s empire from Central Asia, Kabul, Punjab, Delhi, part of Bihar, south to Gwalior
By 1531	Kamran (Humayun’s brother) seizes Punjab, already controlling Kabul and Qandahar
1530–1556	reign of Humayun
1530/31??	Humayun defeats Afghan force (pro-Lodi) in east
15??	Bahadur Shah of Gujarat seizes Malwa (Gujarat: many Lodi sympathizers)—large army, cannon, Ottomans, Portuguese
1535	Humayun campaigns against Bahadur Shah, captures Champanir, withdraws
1530–35?	Sher Kahn Sur (Afghan) emerges in Bihar
1537	Sher Khan invades Bengal, defeats Mahmud Shah (Bengali ruler), besieges him at Gaur (Bengali capital)
1537/8??	Humayun captures Chunar fort; Sher Khan captures Gaur ...
1556–1605	reign of Akbar; 1556–1560 Bairam Khan (Persian Shia) as regent
1556	Hemu (Sur) attacks Delhi with “huge” army; Bairam Khan and Akbar win Second Battle of Panipat despite smaller force thanks to arrow striking Hemu, allowing Akbar to capture and kill him
1556/7?	Moguls victorious against Sikandar (Sur), who flees to Bengal; Moguls occupy Lahore and seize Multan
1557–1558	siege of Gwalior (Moguls finally defeat Sur garrison)
1558	Moguls seize Ajmer
1558	Moguls defeat last Sur prince, annex Jaunpur: Moguls now control Hindustan
1560	Bairam Khan invades Rajasthan and Malwa
March 1560	Akbar demands Bairam step down
1560??	Mogul commander Adham Khan invades Malwa; defeats Sultan Baz Bahadur at Sarangpur, who flees to Khandesh
156???	Akbar removes Adham Khan, pursues Baz Bahadur, suffers defeat against Bahadur alliance with Khandesh and Berar
156???	Bahadur regains control of Malwa; Mogul army defeats him and annexes province
1561	Sher Khan [!!! Other sources declare him dead in 1545] marches from Chunar toward Jaunpur; Moguls defeat him and seize Chunar
1564	Moguls invade Gondwana, defeat leader (Queen Rani Durgavati), take capital of Chauragarh and attach province to Malwa
1564	Abdullah Khan (Uzbek? Rebel, governor of Malwa) revolts
1564	Akbar defeats Abdullah at Mandu; Abdullah flees to Sultanate of Gujarat
1565–66	Full Uzbek revolt; early 1566, Akbar withdraws to Agra, rebels hold east
1572	Civil war in Gujarat; Akbar invades, 3 months later wins victory 10 years of war in Bengal; Akbar finally victorious [Descendants of Akbar expand realm, continue policies—see Britannica]
1679	Aurangzeb re-institutes jizya (poll tax) on non-Muslims
1680–1	Rajputs revolt against poll tax
1686–7	Aurangzeb conquers Deccan (Bijapur and Golconda)
1689–90	Aurangzeb conquers Tanjore and Trichinopoly: empire at largest extent



# MOGUL EMPIRE: AURANGZEB

The Mogul Empire was an enormous kingdom founded in AD 1526 and ruled by the direct descendents of Genghis Khan through the line of Chagatai. The empire reached its height in the eighteenth century, which saw tremendous territorial expansion and generation of wealth. Among the most famous leaders—and among the last—was Aurangzeb.

Aurangzeb was the third son of Mogul emperor Shah Jahan. Showing discipline and ambition from an early age, Aurangzeb is said to have ridden against and subdued a war elephant with a lance after it went berserk—at the age of just fifteen. He began leading military operations at the age of sixteen, commanding a force of 10,000 to 15,000 men at Orchha, albeit from a position of safety and with the aid of experienced military leaders. Nonetheless, Aurangzeb grew up quickly and held a number of important positions throughout his career, including his first post as Viceroy of Deccan at the age of eighteen.



*The Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in the marriage procession of his eldest son the Imperial Prince Dara Shikoh.*



*Left: A 1740 German map of Northern India and Central Asia, shows the extent of the powerful Mogul Empire against the mountains and waterways of the region.*

## The Greatest Pirate, Every

Aurangzeb collected obscene amounts of tribute, the equivalent of tens of millions of dollars a year, which at the time was an unfathomable amount of money. Because of his devotion to Islam, Aurangzeb established a pilgrimage route to Mecca. In one of the most famous acts of piracy of all time, a group of Mogul ships traveling along this route was captured and raided by British pirate Henry Every, known to many now as the greatest pirate of all time. The incident—in which the Moguls lost roughly approximately one million dollars of treasure from the Ganj-i-Sawai (Gunsway)—caused serious political troubles with the British East India Company and set off the first-known manhunt in history. Others involved in the raid were captured and executed, but Every and his loot were never found.

*Below: Aurangzeb, the sixth Mughal Emperor, holds court; Shaistah Khan stands behind Prince Muhammad Azam.*

## BETRAYAL AND INTRIGUE

Shah Jahan became sick in 1657 and the struggle for power kicked off between Aurangzeb and his eldest brother, Dara Shikoh. Unexpectedly, Shah Jahan recovered from his illness, but his reign was over—Aurangzeb forced him to remain in his own palace after defeating his brother at Samugarh in May 1658. The wars of succession were bloody and full of betrayal and intrigue.

During this period, warfare saw increased reliance on firearms from the west. New tactics developed around the fusion of old and new weaponry, with armies still relying heavily on mounted warriors and infantry wielding spears, swords, and bows.

The Moguls were Muslim, and Aurangzeb was known for destroying non-Muslim temples and for his religious intolerance—a stark contrast to the tolerant practices of his ancestor

Akbar. Aurangzeb was nonetheless a great scholar and a man of immense intelligence as well as military prowess. He knew Classical Arabic of the Qur'an fluently, as well as the Chagatai language of the empire's Turkic heritage. He was religiously devout, but saw no conflict between his religious practices and his ruthlessness as a leader and warrior.

Aurangzeb's aggressive policies garnered him early success as a leader and emperor, but did not win him many friends. By the time of his death, the empire was on the verge of collapse. Eventually the Marathas overthrew the Moguls after a twenty-seven-year war at the end of the seventeenth century.





# MARATHA EMPIRE

The Marathas were a Hindu people ruled by the Moguls. Unrest caused by Aurangzeb's intolerant policies, coupled with the weakened Mogul Dynasty, prompted the Marathas to revolt and wage what became a twenty-seven-year war with Aurangzeb. In the end, the Marathas secured victory and took control. The Maratha Empire gradually expanded its realm. The kingdom began in the southern Deccan, but came to stretch from the Tamil Nadu to Pakistan and Afghanistan in the north. The northward movement was halted during the third Battle of Panipat, from which it took ten years for the empire to recover.

*Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a Maratha king who founded the Maratha Empire, which at its zenith ruled most of the Indian subcontinent.*

## On Land and At Sea

The Marathas created a competent navy capable of operating in deep water, armed with guns and manned by crews who know both how to sail and fight. The Maratha navy even captured ships from the British East India Company, the foremost of naval power at the time. The Maratha Navy is the forerunner of today's Indian Navy.

## HERO AND MILITARY STRATEGIST

The great hero of the Marathas was Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who established the kingdom and fought against the Moguls. Like his contemporary Aurangzeb, Shivaji was precocious and showed courage and military prowess at an early age. He also had a scholarly disposition, drawing heavily on the Ramayana and Mahabharata for inspiration. Shivaji was a brilliant military strategist and used unconventional tactics—including guerilla warfare—to overcome larger and stronger opponents with an efficiency that shocked and terrified his opponents.

Shivaji's first victory, which alone earned him a place in Indian legend, was at the Battle of Pratapgarh in 1659, against the forces of Afzehl Khan, a fearsome military leader. Shivaji could not be enticed from the hills, where he had the advantage. Before attacking Shivaji asked to negotiate peace with Afzehl Khan. The two were to meet unarmed, but Afzehl Khan concealed a dagger, which he used to stab Shivaji. Shivaji, however, wore chainmail beneath his clothes, which saved him from the blow. Using a concealed weapon of his own, Shivaji slashed Afzehl Khan across the abdomen, spilling his entrails. A skirmish ensued in which Shivaji's bodyguard, Jiva Mahala, saved his lord by defeating the Khan's bodyguard. Shivaji's men captured and beheaded Afzal Khan and then attacked his forces from their hiding place in a nearby forest.



*Below: Equestrian portrait of the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb. He was emperor for almost 49 years, and declared himself Alamgir—"Conqueror of the World".*



## TWENTY-SEVEN-YEAR WAR

After Shivaji established his kingdom in 1674, the Marathas waged war continuously against the Moguls in an unprecedented twenty-seven-year campaign—the longest in the nation's history—which brought the Mogul Empire to its knees. Shivaji died in 1680 and was succeeded by his son, Shambaji, who was later captured, tortured, and killed by the Mogul leader Aurangzeb. Despite internal conflicts over succession, the Marathas recovered and continued their expansion, eventually defeating the Moguls in 1707. The empire reached its height under the Peshwas in the mid-eighteenth century.

*Below: This illustration, from The Works of Daniel Defoe, shows the horror of the daughter of Emperor Aruangezeb when Captain Every bursts into her cabin after his capture of the Mughal trader, Ganj-i-Sawai.*





# THE THIRD BATTLE OF PANIPAT

In 1761 after about a century of expansion, the Marathas were at last halted in the growth of their empire at the Third Battle of Panipat, located about 50–60 miles directly north of New Delhi. The Marathas advanced north, but were blocked by an alliance of the Durrani and Rohilla from Afghanistan.

## ABLE LEADERSHIP

The Marathas were led by Sadashivrao Bhao, a capable leader with a large force and heavy artillery from the French. Unfortunately for the Marathas, however, their allies did not come to their aid at the battle, and they faced a strong alliance led by Ahmad Shah Durrani. Ahmad Shah Durrani was instrumental in establishing Afghanistan in its modern form. Sadashivrao Bhao had already gained several victories against Shah Duranni in the north, but was unable to secure the allegiance of the Muslim peoples of the region, something that Shah Duranni was able to accomplish.

## WEAPONRY

The heavy French guns and cavalry of the Marathas proved ineffective against the mounted artillery of the Durrani and Rohillas, whose maneuverability turned out to be decisive. The battle—as many during this time period across the globe—was fought with a mixture of old and new weaponry. Bows, muskets, lances, artillery, and swords were all employed in this one fateful and bloody encounter. The imbalance between old and new weaponry—and the tactics that necessarily accompanied each—may have contributed to the Maratha defeat at Panipat, as the artillery was not fully integrated into the more traditional cavalry and infantry of the Maratha army. The Marathas' flanks failed, and they did not have reserves to strengthen their position. As a result, they were routed and Sadashivrao Bhao was slain.

## THE SPOILS OF BATTLE

The Third Battle of Panipat was one of the largest battles of the eighteenth century with untold thousands of deaths in a single day. While we cannot be certain of the size of the armies, some estimates place the total number of combatants between 120,000 and 130,000, with fatalities reaching more than half of that. There are many stories of captives being brutally massacred in the wake of the battle, with women raped and children enslaved. The results of this battle were absolutely



*The Third battle of Panipat took place on January 14th, 1761. It was one of the largest battles fought in the 18th century, with between 60-70,000 killed in a matter of days, and 40,000 Marathas slaughtered in cold blood by the Afghan coalition the day after the battle.*



*Above: When Madhavrao Peshwa was cremated, his wife, Ramabai, performed Sati, lying on the funeral pyre beside her husband and being burned alive.*

devastating for the Maratha Empire. More than a loss, the Third Battle of Panipat was a crushing defeat, with significant losses of soldiers, military leaders, women and children, and not insignificantly, pride. It took ten years to recover under the leadership of Peshwa Madhavrao. Madhavrao ascended to the throne at the age of sixteen after the death of Sadashivrao Bhao. Over the next decade, he fought several battles, gradually reclaiming Maratha dominance in the north. Madhavrao succumbed to tuberculosis at a young age in 1772. He showed himself to be an exceptional leader, but his untimely death was fatal for the empire. Contention among the Marathas prevented them from presenting a unified front against the many pressures besieging their empire, and they quickly began to disintegrate, particularly with the increased efforts of the British.



## Generations Later

Recent studies have demonstrated that several families living in the vicinity of Panipat are actually descendants of the Maratha survivors who fled and hid in the forests surrounding the plain.

*Below: An illustration from the Manuscript of Baburnama (Memoirs of Babur) in the late 16th century, showing the battle of Panipat and the death of Sultan Ibrahim, the last of the Lodi Sultans of Delhi.*



# THE SIEGE OF SERINGAPATAM

The eighteenth century saw the tremendous rise of British imperialism and colonization worldwide, including in India. By the end of the century, Britain had fought a series of wars in southern India for control of Mysore, finally succeeding in its efforts during the final Anglo-Mysore war, which culminated in the Siege of Seringapatam. Their efforts at Seringapatam (the Anglicized version of Srirangapatnam) left the British East India Company victorious and allowed them to restore the Wodeyar Dynasty to power. With the Wodeyars reestablished, the British could maintain control of the region and its politics.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SERINGAPATAM

Seringapatam, which is named after an important twelfth-century temple dedicated to Sri Ranga or Vishnu, is actually an island in the Kaveri River. It is important as a religious center and is where Sultan Tippu, Sultan of Mysore had his palace in the late eighteenth century. While the island is of Hindu origin, the town became the capital of Tippu's Muslim Mysore. Tippu was successful in his early military career, but, due to several mistakes, gradually lost control of Mysore to the British. In 1789 he attacked the raja of Travancore, a British ally. As a result, in 1792 he ended up conceding large territories of his kingdom through the Treaty of Seringapatam. It didn't take him long to arouse British aggression again by negotiating with France, which provoked the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War.



Above: An Indian soldier of Tipu Sultan's army. The traditional costume of Tipu's infantry generally consists of a "Tyger Jacket," a long woolen purple shirt with white diamond shaped spots. A red and white muslin turban, matching the red sash around his waist are accents.

## SERINGAPATAM ATTACKED

In April 1799 General George Harris attacked Seringapatam with a combined force of British and Indian troops supplied by the Nizam of Hyderabad. Harris had previously seen battle in the American colonies at the Battle of Lexington and Concord, as well as at Bunker Hill. He was significantly more successful in India, and the Siege of Seringapatam was really the culmination of a triumphant campaign he led against Sultan Tippu. The British repeatedly laid siege to Seringapatam. The total number of combatants is estimated at around 80,000, meaning that Tippu was outnumbered by nearly two to one. The fortress wall was breached strategically in early May and a few days later, the British and their allies stormed the fortress. Tippu was killed in the siege and his wealth was plundered.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH DOMINANCE

While swords and talwars were still used in the fighting, the battle was decided by the use of cannons and muskets. Tippu is said to have fired hunting weapons at the British. The British also used mines to help breach the fortress walls. The siege marked an end to the resistance in Mysore against the British, allowing the British to establish dominance in the region—and throughout India—all the way until Indian Independence in 1947. Due to the significance of the event, the site of the battle is now largely a museum itself, and the temples, Tippu's palace, and a mosque he built all attract visitors to the island.

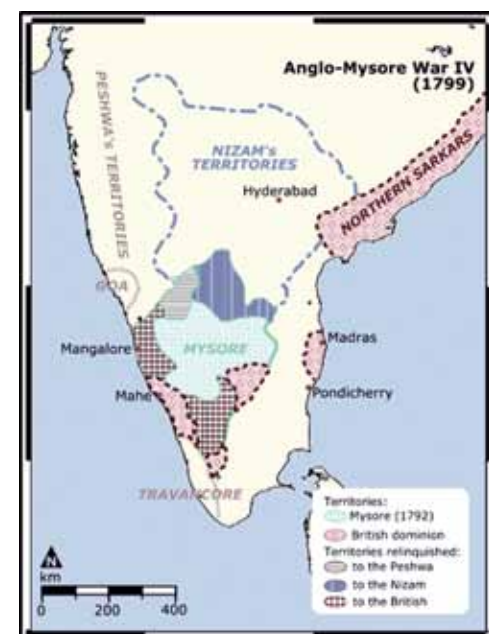
Right: *Tippu Sultan, Warrior King, firing at his advancing British foes at the 1799 Siege of Seringapatam. It proved fruitless in the end—he was found among the dead at the end of the siege, shot in the head and stripped of his finery.*



*Jayachama Rajendra Wadiyar Bahadur was the 25th and last Maharaja of Mysore—he ruled from 1940–1950, and saw Indian Independence become reality in 1947. He was a noted philosopher and philanthropist.*

## Tippu's Treasures

Much of the wealth captured in the siege is still in museums in England. Of particular note is a device known as "Tippu's Tiger," a mechanical wooden tiger mauling a European man. Both the tiger and the man move and make sounds. The device is now housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

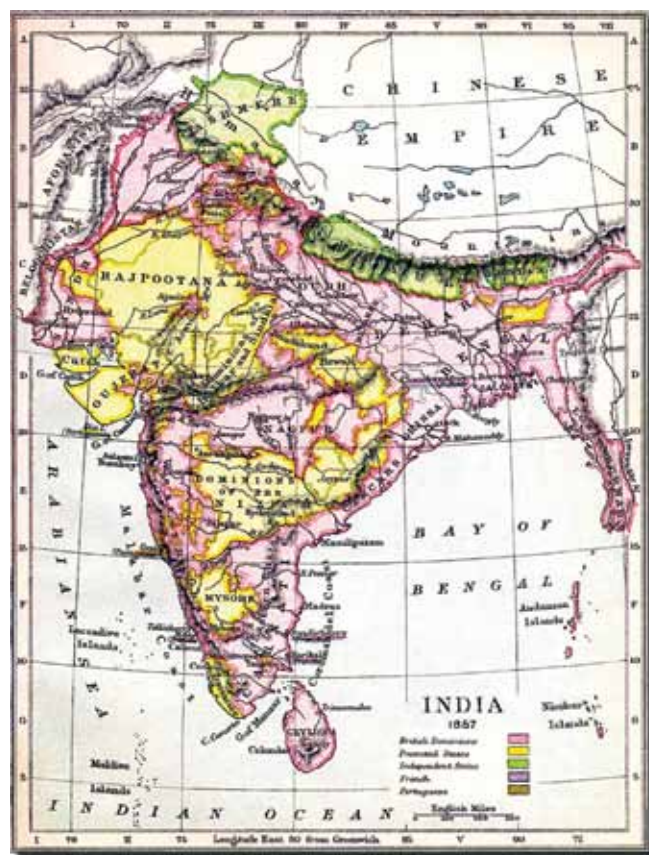


Right: Map illustration showing the territories involved in the third Anglo-Mysore War between the British East India Company and the Kingdom of Mysore of southern India.



# INDIAN MUTINY

The firing by Indian troops on their British officers in Meerut on May 10, 1857, unleashed—apart from a military mutiny—such intense anti-British fervor that the ensuing events are recalled today as India's first war of independence. The oft-cited proximate cause—rumors that Muslims and Hindus would have to commit sacrilege by biting off the tips of bullet cartridges greased with pork and beef fat—glosses over a host of simmering resentments.



Left: *Tatya Tope was one of the renowned Maratha generals in the Indian Rebellion of 1857. He held off the British forces for over a year, but was betrayed by his close friend, Man Singh, and was captured, tried and executed within 11 days in 1859.*

Above: *A map of undivided India in 1857, showing British Dominions and Protected States, Independent States, and areas under French and Portuguese control.*

## THE EAST INDIA TRADING COMPANY

As the Mogul Empire and independent kingdoms of India declined, Great Britain continued to amass more power through the offices of the East India Trading Company. This slow, mercantile invasion had shown its hand in the annexation of Oudh, a Muslim kingdom whose leaders, in the view of British Governor-General Lord Dalhousie, were guilty of gross mismanagement. In addition, Hindu traditionalists resented the increasing numbers of Christian missionaries and the well-meaning but heavy-handed attempts to reform “barbaric” practices such as *suttee*, the immolation of Hindu widows.

## FROM MEERUT TO GWALIOR

By 1857, Britain had annexed more than 250,000 square miles of India and offended both the Hindu and Muslim populations. It had also reduced its British troop numbers to about 33,000. Native troops numbered 233,000. The Indian troops at Meerut rescued their comrades, imprisoned for refusing to use the new cartridges (not, in fact, greased with beef or pork fat), and marched to Delhi, nearly forty miles away, where the all-native garrison joined the cause and proclaimed themselves followers of the elderly Mogul emperor, Bahadur Shah II.

In June Indian troops at Kanpur and Lucknow also mutinied. Kanpur surrendered early, whereupon its British citizenry and those Indian soldiers who had not mutinied were massacred. Lucknow settled in for a long siege. Britain dispatched reinforcements with considerable speed. The British were aided by 10,000 troops in the Punjab, which prevented the uprising from spreading there. They recaptured Delhi on September 20.



Above: *This is a photograph of the No. 9 Mosque in Meerut, which was the principal meeting place of the mutineers, and the place where the uprising began.*



The first reinforcements arrived in Lucknow on September 25, but the recapture of that city did not occur until March 1858.

Sir Hugh Rose, British commander in chief, then conducted a mopping-up campaign, taking the last rebel stronghold of Gwalior on June 20, 1858. The mutiny officially ended on July 8, 1858, but the rebel leader, Tantia Topi, continued a small guerilla war until his capture and execution on April 18, 1859. Atrocities had been committed on both sides. Queen Victoria abandoned all pretense and declared herself Empress of India in 1876. Independence would have to wait.

Left: *Sutte, or Sati, was (and) is the practice of self-immolation of Hindu widows, who would—voluntarily or otherwise—be burned alive on their husband's funeral pyre.*

## Indian Independence

The man who would lead India to victory was born eleven years after Britain suppressed the mutiny. In the end, India followed Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi to one of history's most remarkable—and nonviolent—victories. Universally recognized as one of the world's great leaders, Gandhi's dedication to the Hindu-Jain principle of *ahimsa*, nonviolence, inspired the peaceful resistance of his country to foreign rule, though, sadly, even Gandhi could not bridge the anger dividing the subcontinent's Hindu and Muslim populations. When at last British colonialism in India ended in 1947—five months before Gandhi's tragic assassination—it was not a single, united India, but a divided India and Pakistan that each won independence.



# THE GREAT GAME

The “Great Game” is the name used to describe the power struggle between Great Britain and Russia over fertile lands in Central Asia, home to modern-day Afghanistan. For nearly a hundred years, Russia and Great Britain danced with one another in the Great Game, which saw fantastic tales of intrigue and espionage, as well as bloody armed conflict.



*“Remnants of an Army,” by Elizabeth Butler, portrays William Brydon—the only survivor of a 4,500 retreat from Kabul in 1842, arriving at the gates of Jalalabad. Legend has it that his horse died upon reaching the gates.*



## The Great Game in Literature

The term “Great Game” was coined by Arthur Conolly, but became popular thanks to its use in Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim* (1901), the tale of Kimball O’Hara, the orphaned son of an Irish soldier in India some time after the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Kim is so brown from the sun and so accustomed to the ways of India that he passes as a native. He eventually becomes trained as a spy and becomes involved in the intrigue of the Great Game.

Above: *Photograph of a group of Afridis taken by John Burke in 1878. The Afridis were a powerful, independent Pashtun tribe, who defended their mountainous strongholds with tenacity and bravery, impressing the British who took them on as troops. They were excellent soldiers and very good skirmishers. The Afridi soldiers are pictured with their long and heavy Afghan muskets—they were accomplished sharpshooters.*

Below: *A map of Persia as it stood in 1814.*



## THE GREAT BEAR ADVANCES

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British had established control over the majority of the Indian subcontinent. Russia, meanwhile, continued its expansion into Central Asia, which had begun more than two centuries before with the conquest of Siberia under Ivan the Terrible. With Russia growing in strength and size, the British feared that the Great Bear would make an attack on India via the lands to the northwest. The British therefore saw it as critical to take control of Afghanistan.

## BRITISH SUFFER SETBACKS

The British suffered staggering losses in the First Anglo-Afghan War from 1839 to 1842. Even though they had scored some strategic victories, the British were unable to secure any holdings in Afghanistan. In 1839 they captured Kabul, but within the next couple of years, were forced to retreat. In 1842 what is perhaps the most famous incident of the First Anglo-Afghan War took place. A troop of 4,500 British and Indian soldiers, accompanied by roughly 12,000 civilians, were defeated and massacred as they retreated from Kabul to Jalalabad. Few survived. However, the most famous tale is that of a British medical officer, William Brydon, who completed the 90-mile trip from Kabul to Jalalabad alone. He had been severely wounded in the head and it is reported that his horse collapsed and died immediately upon reaching the fort at Jalalabad. Other survivors were officers who had been taken captive and then later released.

This war was a shocking defeat for the British, who up until that point had seemed fairly invincible in military might. This added to British concern over a possible Russian attack on India. The intrigue and espionage of the Great Game only escalated from there. One of the most famous British characters of the great game was Arthur Conolly, who was involved in various espionage missions in Central Asia, often under the alias “Khan Ali.” He was eventually caught while trying to rescue fellow British officer, Charles Stoddart. As a result, both were executed by the Emir of Bukhara in 1842.

## AFGHANISTAN’S STRATEGIC LOCATION

The Second Anglo-Afghan War from 1878 to 1880 was far more favorable for the British than the first. After a successful military campaign, the British largely left Afghanistan with Afghan leaders to rule over internal affairs, all the while retaining control of foreign relations and negotiations. The Treaty of Gandamak, which ended the war, granted control of several border areas to Britain to help them in their efforts of preventing a Russian invasion of India.



# INDIA-PAKISTAN WARS

The tension that defines the India-Pakistan relationship—now more than a half century of war and diplomatic conflict—began immediately after independence and partition in 1947. Following the suggestion of Great Britain, more than 560 autonomous rulers chose to accede either to India or Pakistan. Only the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir had not decided by the August date. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of people rioted or rushed for the new borders, having discovered they lived in the “wrong” country—either Hindu India or Muslim Pakistan. The birth pangs of the two countries cost approximately half a million lives and left one million homeless.



*Pakistani troops capture Khem Karan (Khem Karn) in India during the 1965 India-Pakistan War.*

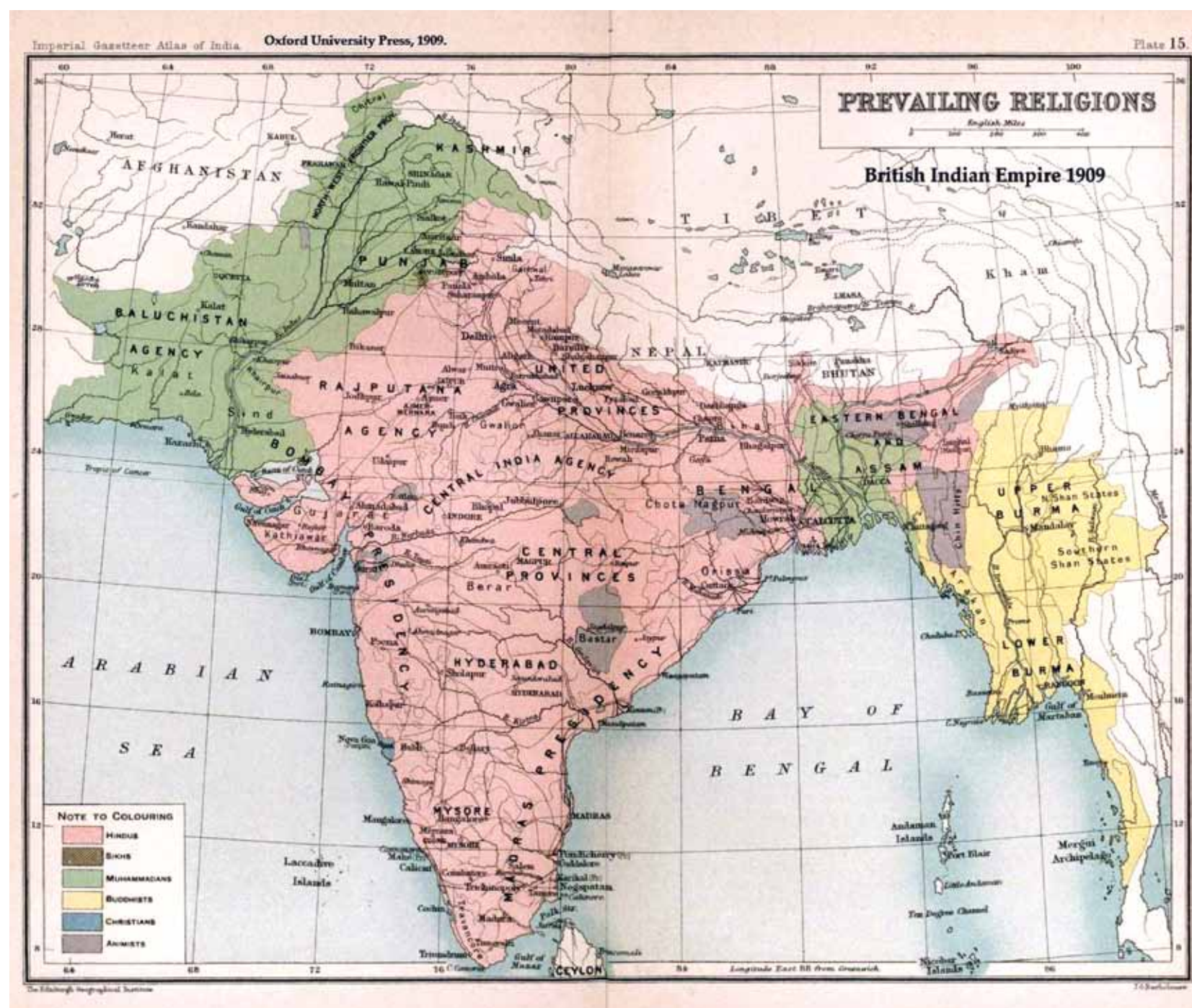
## HOT SPOTS OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The major sticking point for both India and Pakistan has been the state of Jammu and Kashmir. When Kashmiri Muslims rebelled in October 1947, armed Pakistanis arrived to aid them; the Maharaja turned to India for aid and belatedly acceded to that country. War raged until a United Nations ceasefire order in January 1949 gave India two thirds of the region and Pakistan the rest. A ceasefire line was established, and both countries agreed to abide by the results of a referendum to be held in Jammu and Kashmir; said referendum, however, has yet to occur.

War erupted again in April 1965. Again the UN stepped in, ending hostilities on September 23, 1965; the Tashkent Declaration, signed on January 10, 1966, stated that the nations would seek peaceful means of settling the issue and negotiated

the withdrawal of troops. A third war, lasting only ten days, flared on December 3, 1971. In this instance, East Pakistanis revolted, seeking independence, and Indian troops invaded in support. West Pakistan was defeated, and, as a result, East Pakistan became a new country, Bangladesh; the total estimated casualties of the struggle were put at more than one million.

Below: A map of the British Indian Empire in 1909, showing the distribution of religions, including Hindus, Sikhs, “Muhammadans,” Buddhists, Christians, and Animists.





## INDIA-PAKISTAN WARS



Left: *Pervez Musharraf, President of Pakistan with Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. secretary of defense (out of frame), at a joint press conference in the Pentagon on Feb. 13, 2002.*

### THE READY THREAT OF TERRORISM

Although relations between the two countries remained civil for nearly three decades, both India and Pakistan acquired nuclear weapons and have tested them openly, flexing their military muscles and instigating more than one international crisis. In early 1999, however, when armed Pakistanis moved across the old ceasefire line in Kashmir's Kargil region, and a brief but intense war followed, neither resorted to nuclear force. Later that year, General Pervez Musharraf seized power in Pakistan in a military coup, retaining control until 2008.

A terrorist attack in the Indian city of Mumbai, also in 2008, left more than 170 people dead; India claims that Pakistan's Directorate for Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) orchestrated the attack, although Pakistan denies the charge (the terrorist group that carried out the strike operated out of Pakistan). All-out war has so far been avoided, but fears of a truly terrible conflict between these two long-term antagonists continue.



Right: *Brig. Hari Singh Deora A.V.S.M (Ati Vishisht Sewa Medal), of the 18th Cavalry (Indian Army) standing on a tank. This picture was taken after the Indian Army had destroyed over 100 Patton and Sherman Tanks of Pakistani Army during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan War. The site was later named "Patton Nagar" in Pakistan.*

Below: *Indian soldiers fighting in the 1947 Indo-Pakistan War.*





# SRI LANKAN CIVIL WAR

Between 1983 and 2009, a deadly civil war raged between the government of Sri Lanka and a group called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Recognized as a terrorist organization by the Sri Lankan government, as well as by many other countries, the Tamil Tigers, as they were known, never wavered from their goal: to form a separate sovereign Tamil nation, Eelam, in the island's north and east. Led by Velupillai Prabhakaran, who founded the group in 1972, the Tigers funded their activities through illegal ventures such as drug running.



*Velupillai Prabhakaran, the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). He was killed by the Sri Lankan military in May 2009.*

## PROBLEMS ROOTED IN COLONIALISM

Sri Lanka's troubles stemmed from its years as a British colony (1796–1948). British magnates brought Hindu Tamils from India to staff their tea plantations on the island, which they called Ceylon. The primarily Buddhist Sinhalese, who made up about three-quarters of the population, resented what they perceived as unfair advantages awarded to Tamils. In the 1950s, this resentment fueled a Sinhala revival, which promoted Buddhism, as well as Sinhala language, culture, and superiority.

## UNLEASHING THE TIGER

The Tamil called for self-determination. In the 1970s the Tamil Tigers started a guerrilla war that targeted, among others, rival Tamil organizations. In 1983 the Tigers killed thirteen Sri Lankan soldiers. Hundreds more were killed in anti-Tamil riots in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo. At this point, outright war began. India, which had at first supported the Tamils, provided arms to the Tigers. Then, in 1987 they tried to arrange a truce, sending in troops to enforce it, but the Tamils refused the terms. Violence ensued and 1,000 Indians lost their lives. The Tamils regained the city of Jaffna. After India withdrew in 1990, war resumed between the Tigers and Sri Lanka.

## HIGH-PROFILE ASSASSINATIONS

In addition to the ongoing war, confined primarily to the north, the Tigers sent suicide bombers around the country and even to India. Two high-profile assassinations are widely attributed to the Tigers: former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993. In Colombo, a suicide bombing killed one hundred people while another injured President Chandrika Kumaratunga. The violence subsided after Norway brokered a ceasefire in 2002; however, it flared again in 2006, the year the European Union declared the Tigers a terrorist organization. The Sri Lankan military seized eastern Tamil strongholds in 2007, ended the ceasefire in 2008, and sent 50,000 soldiers north in a major offensive. After months of heavy fighting, they took the de facto Tamil capital, Kilinochchi, in January 2009 and pressed onward. By mid-May, they controlled the entire coast, having eradicated the remaining Tigers.

*Below: Women at War: a parade of female LTTE (Tamil Tiger) soldiers in Killinochchi in 2002.*



*Left: A map showing the nation of Eelam proposed by the Tamil Tigers.*

*Below: An LTTE (Tamil Tiger) Bike Platoon, north of Killinochchi in 2004.*





# TYPVS ORBIS T







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# NORTHERN AND EASTERN ASIA

Northern and Eastern Asia share certain commonalities of language and culture going back thousands of years. Regardless of any familial relationship among these peoples, their histories are intertwined not only through brotherhood, but also through bloodshed.

For thousands of years, horse archers galloping across the steppes of Central and Northern Asia dominated the landscape. Under the leadership of Genghis Khan, the Mongols created the largest contiguous land empire that has ever existed. In the east, the great dynasties of China became some of the most advanced civilizations the world has ever known. First unified in the second century BC, China developed advanced systems of government, regulation, and defense to ensure the protection of its large borders and has been home to great traditions of military strategy on enormous scales, and also to traditions of individual skill and bravery. Farther east, Japan took sword-making technology from the Tang Dynasty of China and refined the processes, creating some of the most beautifully artistic blades ever produced. A warrior culture that has been the subject of legend and fantasy naturally grew out of this tradition. Korea's various kingdoms—the Mongol and Turkic peoples of the west, the Chinese to the south, and the Japanese in the east—rose and fell. Koreans have had to balance and fight influence and arms from Manchuria and China, Siberia, and Japan.





# SPRING AND AUTUMN PERIOD

In 771 BC the last emperor of the Western Zhou, which had ruled over a network of feudal states since the eleventh century BC, was killed during an invasion. Emperor Youwang's successor, Pingwang, moved the capital east to Luoyang. Because of this, the next several hundred years of Chinese history are referred to as the Eastern Zhou (770–256 BC). The period from 770 to the mid-fifth century BC takes its more specific name, the Spring and Autumn Period, from a book of annuals by the same name.

## A TIME OF INNOVATION

Chinese culture, technology, and warfare underwent major changes during the Spring and Autumn Period. As the emperor's power waned, he was superseded by his vassal states, which warred with nomadic "barbarians" and, all too often, with one another. The armies increased dramatically in size. Chariot warfare reached its peak and declined. Lamellar armor, iron weaponry, crossbows, and horsemen came into use.

## FEUDAL CITY-STATES

Out of the 170 or so feudal city-states of the Zhou, four rose to dominate the political landscape: Qi, Jin, Jin, and Chu. These four maintained a variable and often unstable power balance as the power of the Zhou emperors withered. Chu, a state with looser-than-average connections to Zhou power, began to press north after Huangong of Qi (reigned 685–643 BC), a particularly strong leader, died; however, Chu quickly ran into a different rival in Jin, led by the formidable Wen.

## THE BATTLE OF CHENGPU

In 632 BC the armies of Chu and Jin clashed at Chengpu in what is regarded as one of the most significant battles in ancient Chinese history. Among other reasons, the battle is important in that it provides an early record of a reliable description of a Chinese chariot battle. The armies were all made up of approximately forty thousand men who were deployed in three divisions—left, center, right. Each army fielded chariots—about seven hundred for Jin—which carried three men each: a driver, an archer, and a striker (infantry wielding halberds). The chariots would also have carried gongs, bells, drums, and flags. Their height and speed facilitated mid-battle communications.

## INTERSTATE RIVALRY

Wen crushed the Chu army at Chengpu, defeating Chu's right wing outright and tricking Chu's left wing into believing the opposing Jin wing was retreating. The defeat handed Jin dominance in China until 628 BC, when Wen died. The balance of power then shifted in Chu's favor at the Battle of Mi (598 BC). This game of interstate rivalry would continue for centuries, with none of the four major states ever achieving supreme domination.



Above: The Zhou Dynasty is considered by many to be the pinnacle of Chinese bronzeware. This bronze wine vessel features a cloud pattern decoration.



Above: Chinese plain in the late Spring and Autumn period (5th century BC).

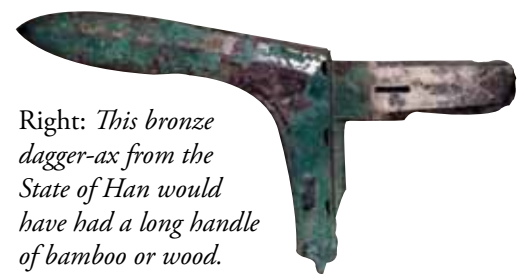


Left: Located in the Hainan Provincial Museum, this bronze tripod vessel dates from the Spring and Autumn period.



# CHINA: WARRING STATES

The weak Zhou dynasty continued, in theory, until 256 BC, when the last of its rulers died, but by 453 BC—the end of the Spring and Autumn Period and the beginning of the Warring States Period—Zhou’s authority had, in fact, already vanished. Each of the state rulers, beginning with those of Wei and Qi in 335 BC, began calling himself “king,” a title formerly reserved for the Zhou.



Right: *This bronze dagger-ax from the State of Han would have had a long handle of bamboo or wood.*

## POWER STRUGGLES

In 453 the state of Jin split into three successor states—Wei, Zhao, and Han—but the disunity and warfare that characterized the Spring and Autumn Period only intensified. Although the number of states had shrunk to twenty-two, the number of powerful states had risen from four in the Spring and Autumn Period to seven: Wei, Zhao, Han, Chu, Qi, Qin, and Yan. The last provides an illustrative example of the power struggle in which all seven engaged.



## CHANGING ARMIES

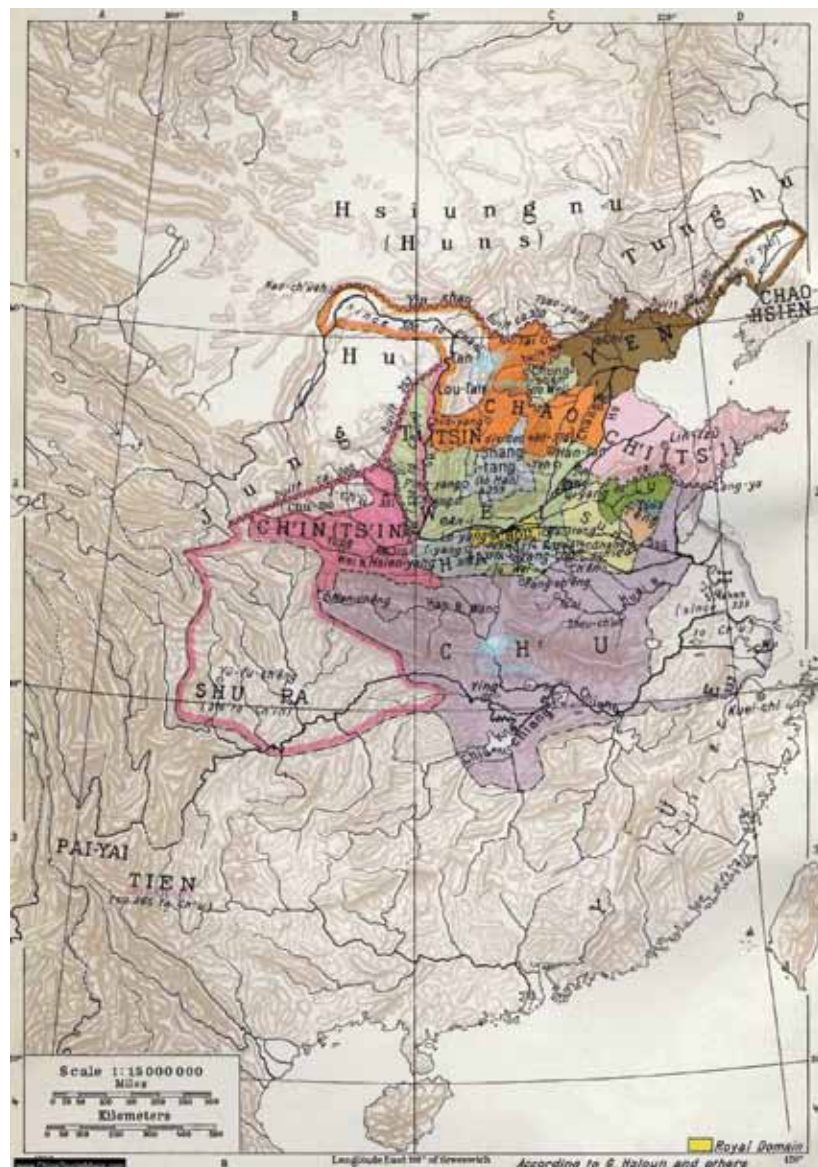
For centuries, Yan had guarded the inner regions of China against a barbarian people called the Mountain Rong, whose hilly terrain discouraged Yan from expanding northward. But land was crucial to amassing power, wealth, and—not incidentally—manpower. Armies grew enormously during the Warring States Period, from the old aristocratic model, which fielded armies of ten thousand to thirty thousand, to massive forces of over half a million. Standing armies of peasants were the norm. The aristocratic chariot disappeared, replaced by vast numbers of infantrymen. Crossbow design was perfected in the fourth century BC. Advances in fortifications were met with advances in siege weaponry.

## THE WARS OF YAN

Yan’s arch-enemy was Qi, a particularly powerful state. Yan was saved by diplomatic maneuvers on at least two occasions. During a Qi invasion in 380 BC, Yan secured aid from other states to repel Qi. On another occasion, this time in 332 BC, occupied territory was returned to Yan through an interstate marriage. In the meantime, Yan invaded Qi in 373 BC with the support of Wei and Lu. When a civil war broke out in Yan in 318 BC, according to the Confucian sage Mencius—who may actually have encouraged the attack—Qi proceeded to invade again. In the beginning, the people welcomed this invasion as freedom from tyrannical overlords. Other states interceded again and threw them back, but only after Qi had seized the capital, Ji, the earliest capital sited at Beijing, and razed the royal temple. In 284 BC, Yan forces invaded Qi but were, in turn, expelled. Yan and Zhao, an erstwhile ally, began fighting shortly afterward. Confucian scholars calling for moral rule—Mencius upbraided Qi for its post-invasion treatment of Yan—went unheeded. Not until the states stopped warring against each other would China finally see peace.

## War and Wisdom

Although the concept of “warring states” defines the period, many positive cultural, legal, philosophical, and technological changes also occurred in China during this era. It was an age of warfare but also of wisdom, with the teachings of Confucius (551–479 BC) spreading throughout the land, legal reforms promoting merit above birth, and improved irrigation techniques that vastly increased agricultural output. Artwork flourished—notably jade carving—as did architecture, including “long walls,” which anticipated the eventual Great Wall. Even the unrest of the period contributed to China’s cultural flowering. The Warring States is the age of Sunzi and his book, the *Art of War* (fifth century BC), one of history’s most famous books, beloved by military strategists throughout the ages.



Above: *Bronze mirrors started to become popular during the Warring States period and were used up until the Qing dynasty, when glass mirrors were introduced.*

Below: *Mencius served as an official and a scholar in the state of Qi from 319 to 312. He was one of the principal interpreters of Confucianism and was possibly a pupil of Confucius’ grandson.*



Left: *The map shows the Warring States period, in roughly 350 BC.*



# CHINA: QIN

The Warring States Period of Chinese history had ended dramatically by 221 BC with Qin dominance over the entire country. For the first time, China had an “emperor” who knit the country together, forging a national identity whose basic borders, culture, and governing philosophy would remain more or less unchanged for the next 2,132 years. China’s first emperor, Shi Huangdi, standardized everything in the country. He completed amazing building projects, including the Great Wall. Yet the Qin dynasty was short-lived, surviving only three years beyond Shi Huangdi’s death in 207. China’s first emperor was, for all intents and purposes, also Qin’s last.

## The Terracotta Army

One of the world’s most spectacular archaeological discoveries, the tomb of Shi Huangdi, demonstrates the power, wealth, and militarism of the Qin Empire—and, more obliquely, shows the reasons for its failure. First unearthed in 1974, the tomb lies near modern Xi’an and contains about eight thousand life-sized terracotta warriors, arrayed in formation and facing east, toward the interior of China and Qin’s historic enemies. The preservation of the terracotta figures, which include crossbowmen, cavalry, infantrymen, and charioteers, complete with terracotta horses and wooden chariots, allows a unique glimpse into the Qin military, from the make of their armor to the color of their uniforms to the composition of their swords—which are, remarkably, still sharp. Amazingly, each of the figures received an individually carved face. The tomb—an example of the massive, expensive, labor-intensive projects that the Qin forced their subjects to produce—led quickly to revolt, hastening the demise of Qin.

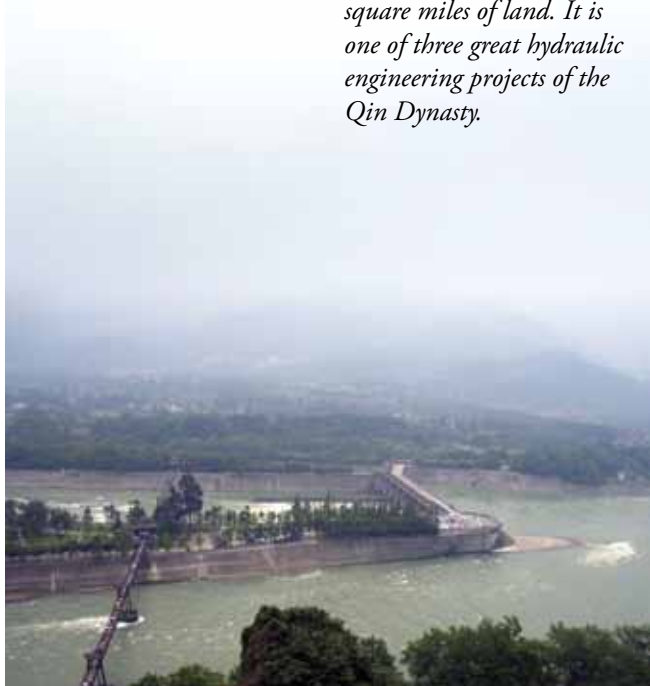
Below: *The Terracotta Army was constructed by over 700,00 workers to provide Shi Huang-di protection after death as well as people to rule over in the afterlife.*

## THE RISE OF QIN

The story of Qin’s rise to power begins more than a century before its final victory. Qin, during the Warring States Period, was one of seven major states battling for dominance and did not, until the end, seem to be the most threatening. It secured a crucial early victory in 316 BC over the minor central states of Shu and Ba (together modern Sichuan), traditionally in Chu’s sphere of influence. Even as Qin raced to secure its foothold in these territories, which would nearly double its area of control, Chu dithered, distracted by its 333–313 BC invasion of Yue. By the time Chu marched on Qin in 312 BC, it was too late. Qin’s army inflicted a terrible defeat. Chu and Qin argued over Ba, sometimes bloodily, for the next several decades, with Qin’s final victory coming around 280 BC. After that, Qin started to threaten Chu proper, taking its capital, Ying, as early as 278 BC. Qin spent the next thirty to forty years solidifying its hold on central China, whittling away Chu in the south, cautiously testing Wei, Zhao, and Han to the north. By 230 BC, Chu was exhausted. That year Han fell, and Qin’s expansion suddenly sped up. In 228 BC, Zhao fell; Wei, three years later. Chu finally collapsed in 223 and Yan in 222. Of the other Warring States, only Qi was left, and it could barely mount a defense, collapsing in 221. Qin’s victory was now complete, the enemy casualty count between 356 and 236 BC alone is estimated at 1.5 million.



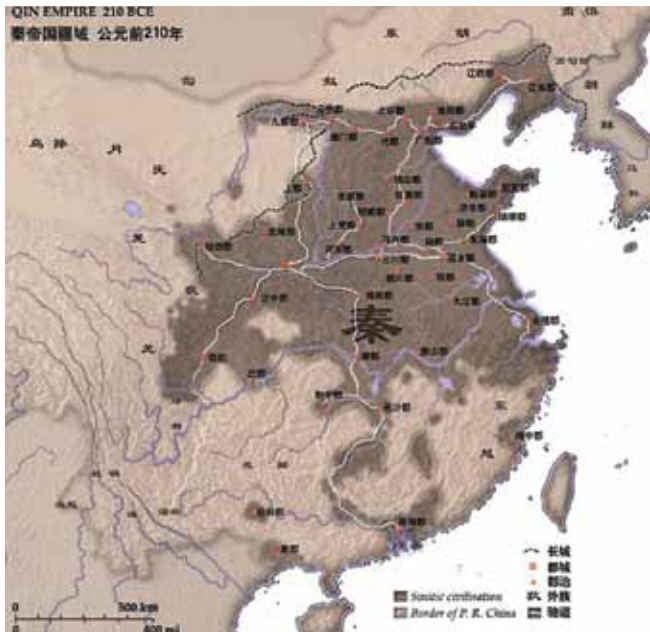
*The Dujiangyan Irrigation System was built in the Kingdom of Qin in 256 BC and is still used today to irrigate over 2,050 square miles of land. It is one of three great hydraulic engineering projects of the Qin Dynasty.*



Above: *Chariots were of prime military importance as attack and pursuit vehicles on the open plains of ancient China.*

Below: *The Qin empire showing the approximate extent of Qin political control at the time of Shi Hyangdi’s death.*

Left: *Shi Huang’s Colonel-in-Chief in his Terracotta Army. Each figure is life sized.*





# XIONGNU AND HAN

The Xiongnu first appeared in the fifth century BC. The northern walls built during the Qin Period became the historic Great Wall, which slowed the raiders, but didn't stop them. In 209 BC a chieftain's son, Maodun, appointed himself shanyu (leader) of the Xiongnu. He rapidly conquered several neighboring peoples. This expanded Xiongnu territory and further threatened China's new Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 BC). In 200 BC Maodun retook the Ordos from the Qin and shortly afterward, attacked Taiyuan. Emperor Gao of Han personally led his forces against him, but Maodun trapped him and forced the emperor to pay yearly tributes.

## XIONGNU AND HAN CHINA

For the next seventy years, Han China followed a policy of appeasement—a remarkable feat considering that some fifty million people lived in China, while there were only 1.5 million Xiongnu. Like the rest of the peoples who lived across the Eurasian steppe, however, every Xiongnu male could at a moment's notice transform into a soldier. The Xiongnu used tactics similar to the later Huns and Mongols (each has been unreliably identified as a descendant of the Xiongnu): approaching rapidly on horseback, firing arrows, and retreating, if necessary. The Chinese lived in fear of their martial skills and ferocity, while priding themselves on their supposed cultural superiority, for hundreds of years.

## OUSTING THE XIONGNU

In 133 BC Emperor Wu went on the offensive against the Xiongnu, ending the years of appeasement. His first offensive at the border city of Mayi failed, but a series of three campaigns

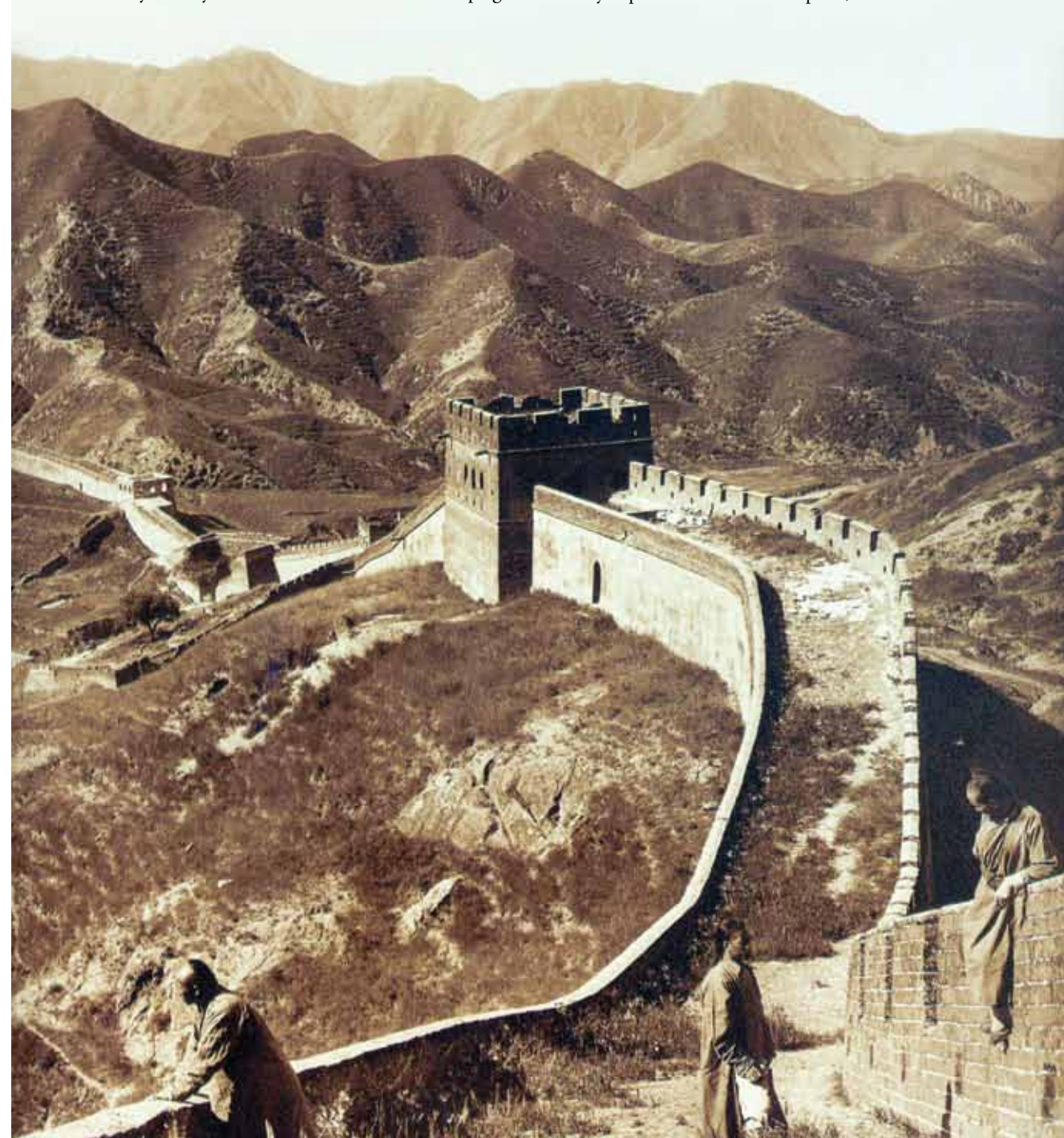
between 127 and 119 BC pushed the Xiongnu north and west. Wu built defenses as far as Dunhuang and, by 108 BC, had conquered Choson in the east, mounting an effective defense against the Xiongnu by establishing friendly relationships with the peoples along the western thrust.

## LAST OF THE XIONGNU

However, the Xiongnu had not quite been defeated. In 51 BC they split in two: one half disappeared into the west while the other continued to trouble China, even ruling part of it briefly from 304–329 BC (the Northern Han Dynasty). Gradually, however, references to the Xiongnu, whose lack of a written language leaves scholars utterly dependent on Chinese reports, faded.



Above: *The Han Dynasty in 87 BC, showing trade routes in white.*



## The Great Wall

The Great Wall as it exists today is a result of building projects started in the seventh century BC and not concluded until the early seventeenth century AD. The monument thus spans more than two thousand years of China's history and attests to the enduring military trouble on the country's northern borders. The initial builders were, however, members of the warring states of the Eastern Zhou Period (Spring and Autumn and Warring States, 770–256 BC), who were interested in fortifying themselves against one another as much as the Xiongnu, the first in a long line of northern "barbarians." China's first emperor, Shi Huangdi (ruled 221–207 BC) tore down the walls between the former independent states while connecting and extending the northernmost into the first "great" wall, stretching 1,800 miles from Pyongyang to Lintao. The final Ming Dynasty wall, visible today, ran for about 4,200 miles—300 miles shorter than the wall built in the Han Dynasty. With two thousand years of architectural, cultural, and military changes between them, the Ming wall looks a good deal different than Emperor Shi Huangdi's wall, but both served precisely the same purpose.

Left: *Photograph of the Great Wall of China from 1907*



# WAR OF THE THREE KINGDOMS

Thanks to a widespread revolt in 184 AD, known as the Yellow Turban Rebellion, the Han Dynasty fell apart, ending in 220 with the abdication of the last emperor. The following 369 years were marked by warfare, competing dynasties, and profound cultural changes.



*The Yellow Turban Rebellion was a peasant revolt led by three brothers who were Taoist healers.*

## The Battle of Red Cliffs

In November 208 AD, the warlord and erstwhile Han official, Cao Cao, rather unfairly portrayed in Chinese literature as the consummate villain, met his foes, Liu Bei and Sun Quan, in the dramatic Battle of Red Cliffs on the Yangtze River. The two southern warlords had combined forces to halt the advance of Cao Cao, who was intent on restoring unity to China, but even so they were outnumbered 50,000 to Cao Cao's 220,000. To control southern China, Cao Cao needed first to control the Yangtze, but his northern troops were unaccustomed to water battles. In an effort to provide them with more familiar terrain, Cao Cao apparently lashed his ships together. A veteran of the opposing force, Huang Gai, then undertook a daring mission: pretending to surrender, he approached Cao Cao's navy in ships loaded with flammable materials. At the last moment he set them on fire and escaped. According to Three Kingdoms, Huang Gai was shot and fell into the water, but he survived while “fires rolled across the river like waves, and the cries of men shook the earth.” Cao Cao was forced to retreat and the dream of unification remained unrealized for another 381 years.



*Above: Statue of Liu Bei in the temple of Zhuge Liang, chancellor of Shu Han in the Three Kingdoms period.*

## THE WAR OF THREE KINGDOMS

When the Han fell apart, three kingdoms arose in its place. Each was led by a general-cu-emperor. The northern kingdom of Wei was led by Cao Cao, the central kingdom of Shu-Han, by Liu Bei, and the southern kingdom of Wu, by Sun Quan. All three kingdoms managed to expand their borders, pushing into modern Korea, Vietnam, and Laos. However, their primary concern was each other. The classic fourteenth-century Chinese novel, Three Kingdoms, immortalized this sixty-year period of intermittent war and anarchy, complete with scheming, maneuvering, and fighting. In 263 Wei conquered Shu-Han, which became known as Jin, and in 280 it conquered Wu.

## DYNASTIES AND DISUNION

The Jin dynasty ruled only briefly over a reunited China. Imperial authority was too weak either to truly knit the country together or defend against the northern nomads, some of whom, especially the Eastern Xiongnu, were now significantly sinicized. Xiongnu attacked Luoyang in 311, paving the way for more incursions. In the fourth century, Xiongnu, Jie, Qianbei, Qiang, and Di all invaded the north, forging their own territories in a subperiod known as the Sixteen Kingdoms.



## COUNTRY REUNITED

In the south, the Eastern Jin (the Jin's southern remnant) conquered Sichuan, only to suffer a rebellion in 400. A military coup d'état at Nanjing followed immediately, which, in turn, was followed by overthrow and replacement by the Liu Song Dynasty in 420. Liu Song enjoyed a small respite from internal wars, but saw heavy fighting against aboriginal peoples. Another rebellion, coup, and short-lived official dynasty followed before Sui finally reunited the country. Altogether, no fewer than twenty-nine dynasties rose and fell in the Six Dynasties Period.



*Left: Hanging silk scroll from the “Romance of the Three Kingdoms.”*

*Above: Sun Quan was known for attracting important people to his cause.*



*Right: The Three Kingdoms period in 262.*

THE SIX LEGITIMATE DYNASTIES					
222–280	317–420	420–479	479–502	502–557	557–589
Wu	Eastern Jin	Liu Song	Southern Qi	Liang	Chen



# TIBET AND TANG

Until about 600 AD, China's foreign business with the nomadic peoples whom it classified as "barbarians" was largely concluded; however, in the waning days of the Sui Dynasty and the opening days of the Tang, China was forced to confront a power that posed both a military and an existential threat: Tibet.



*Songzen Gampo with Princesses Wen Cheng and Bhrikuti Devi, two of his five wives*

## SONGZEN GAMPO

By the time Tibet's great unifier and first emperor, Songzen Gampo, came to the throne in 618, China had already encountered Tibet's 100,000-man army. Both nations attempted to control the tribal peoples between them, but it was the charismatic Songzen who made a lasting impression on China—as indeed he did in Tibet.

## THE ASCENDANCY OF TIBET

Prior to 600, Tibet was fractured into numerous small states and tribes. Songzen's father, Namri Songzen of the Yarlung family, started the wars of conquest, and, between the two of them, they brought Nepal, Kamarupa, Shang Shung (a kingdom in western Tibet, with a capital at Kyunglung), Tuyuhun, the Sumpa, Yang-t'ung, Bailan, and other eastern Qiang tribes into the Tibetan fold (when China conquered the Aza tribal people in 635, no buffers between the two empires existed). Songzen moved the capital to Lhasa, reformed the laws and applied them equally over the whole country, built fabulous palaces and temples, had Tibet's first written language created, and—most significantly, for Tibetans—spread Buddhism throughout his newly united nation.



*Above: The sancai ceramic technique originated during the Tang Dynasty, utilizing tricolored lead glaze fired at high temperatures.*

*Below: Chang'an was the capital of the Tang Dynasty, and the home of the royal court shown here during a pleasant spring outing.*



## CHINA AND TIBET BATTLE FOR CONTROL

Songzen Gampo was known to take wives from the families of kings he had conquered. In 645 he demanded a Chinese bride. Emperor Taizong refused and war ensued with Songzen conquering border regions and the Chinese city of Sung Chou. Needless to say, he got his bride. Peace was established until both Taizong and Songzen died in 649. Over the next century, Tibet and China battled each other, as well as other Central Asian empires. At stake was control of the lucrative Silk Road outposts in the Tarim Basin and Dzungaria. Relations deteriorated, reaching their lowest point in 763, when Tibetan emperor, Trisong Detsen, invaded with an army of 100,000 to 200,000, conquering the Tang capital, Chang'an, and holding it for two weeks. This marked the peak of Tibetan expansion. Tibet descended into battles of dynastic succession after Trisong's reign (755–797) and would not recover for another two centuries.

*Below: Asia in 800, shortly before the reign of Emperor Xianzong of the Tang Dynasty.*



## The An-Shi Rebellion

Despite setbacks in Korea and Tibet, the long-lived Tang dynasty grew wealthy and powerful. Chang'an (modern Xi'an) was a planned, cosmopolitan city with more than a million inhabitants—the world's largest at the time. In the eighth century, however, weak emperors and a growing reliance on military governors, who were often descended from the border peoples they were meant to control, marked the beginning of decline. In 755, one of these border generals, An Lushan, and his second-in-command, Shi Siming, revolted. With a veteran army of more than 100,000, An Lushan, of Sogdian and Turkish descent, took control of Fanyang (Beijing) and the capital city of Luoyang, where he proclaimed himself emperor. Shortly thereafter, he seized Chang'an, the other capital, sending the Tang emperor scurrying to Sichuan. The Tang Dynasty managed to put down the eight-year An-Shi rebellion, but the empire was badly shaken. Only during the reign of Emperor Xianzong (805–820) did the Tang Dynasty recover, but all of Xianzong's gains were lost again by his successors. The military governors became warlords. The last Tang emperor was deposed in 907, and once again China entered a period of martial chaos.

*Below: Emperor Xuanzong of Tang, shown fleeing to Sichuan during the An-Shi rebellion, was criticized for being too trusting of his military governors.*





# THE TANG DYNASTY

The Tang Dynasty was a time of great prosperity in Chinese history, famous for its wealth, power, and flourishing artistic production. Much famous Chinese literature and poetry was produced during the Tang, and production of textiles, painting, and ceramic art reached an impeccable standard. Openness to trade and foreign cultures expanded China's learning during this period, causing the Tang to be home to international styles of music and instrumentation.

## THE ART OF WEAPONRY

The Tang integrated their art into their weaponry, producing swords of exquisite quality and beauty. The famous swords of later Samurai in Japan developed out of the sword-making of the Tang Dynasty. The sword-makers of this dynasty reportedly traveled to Japan with their art, where the forging of masterful blades took on its own development. Tang blades were typically straight and double-edged, with a mirror finish to the fine steel.

## THE FOUNDING OF THE TANG DYNASTY

The Dynasty was founded by Li Yuan in the early seventh century after defeating the Sui Dynasty in a series of conflicts that left Li Yuan in control of the large territory of China that had been unified under the short rule of Sui. After setting up a new government, Li Yuan worked to rebuild the country's wealth, a process that continued successfully for many years. Only with sufficient excess wealth could the Tang foster and promote their artistic achievements. The capital of the Tang Dynasty in China was Chang'an, which was the most populous city in the world at the time.

## THE MILITARY SYSTEM

The dynasty saw significant changes to its military system. In the beginning, soldiers were recruited from the local population and were even responsible for providing their own provisions. They also had to maintain their farms and usually worked during the harvest months. The middle of the eighth century saw a change to this system in which the armies became professional forces. This new system, however, was not without problems. A soldier's allegiance lay with his commander and not necessarily with the state. This helped lay the groundwork for the An Shi Rebellion beginning in AD 755 in which the powerful general An Lushan used his own forces to declare himself emperor.

## GROUNDWORK FOR THE EXPANSION OF CENTRAL ASIA

The great expansion and cultural openness of the Tang Dynasty meant many interactions with borderlands, both peaceful and otherwise. The Tang traded tangible goods as well as knowledge with Turks, Arabs, Indians, and others, often celebrating foreign styles of art and music. But the Tang did clash in battle with great powers beyond its borders. Of particular significance was the Battle of Talas in AD 751, in which the Tang were defeated by the Abbasid Caliphate in the fight for control of Central Asia. Although the battle of Talas was not considered greatly significant at the time, it had tremendous impact on the later development of Central Asia.



Above: *Tang Dynasty in 700, before the An Shi Rebellion and the Battle of Talas.*

Below: *The Chinese version of "The Diamond Sutra," was made in 868 and is the oldest dated printed book in the world.*





# THE BATTLE OF TALAS

The Battle of Talas was fought in July 751 between the Tang Dynasty of China and the Abbasid Caliphate of modern-day Iraq. The Tang Dynasty was expanding westward into the fertile regions of Central Asia and simultaneously, the Abbasids were expanding eastward into the same region. A clash was imminent and unavoidable. In 751, an Abbasid army met a combined force of Tang soldiers and Karluk mercenaries. The Karluks were a Turkic neighbor to the west. The Turkic mercenaries may have comprised a larger portion of the Tang forces than actual Tang soldiers.

## THE DECLINE OF TANG INFLUENCE

During the course of the battle, the Karluks defected, not simply deserting the Tang in the fight against the larger Abbasid army, but actually attacking the Tang from the rear. Only a small band of the original Tang army was able to escape under the leadership of Gao Xianzhi from the valley along the Talas River in modern-day Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, where the battle took place. Only a few years later, the An Lushan rebellion broke out in the north, and, consequently, the Tang had to abandon all plans of retribution against the Abbasids in Central Asia. The weakening of the Tang forces as a result of the rebellion led to a general decline in Tang influence and control along its borders throughout the rest of the eighth century. Instead of being able to regroup and attack anew, the Tang's internal affairs led to Abbasid—and therefore Muslim—control of Central Asia.

## A TURNING POINT

The loss of control was not overnight, however. The later weakening of the Tang as a result of internal rebellion did more to its position in Central Asia than this one battle. But the battle heralded a turning point. Up until then, many local officials in western lands were given official titles by the Tang government to garner their loyalty. These titles existed mostly in name, and the distance from central Tang authority made it difficult for any alignment of objectives on both sides of the equation.

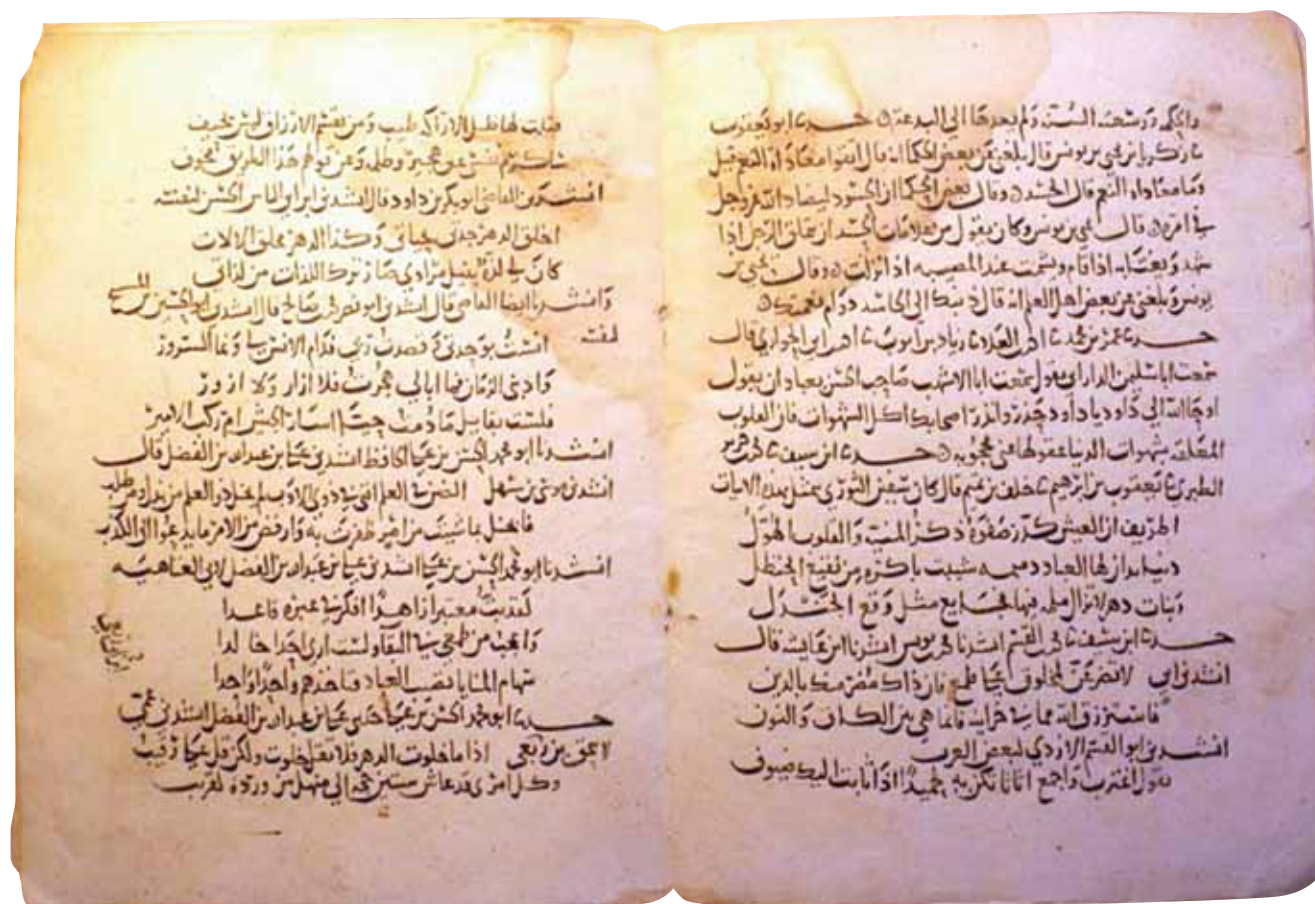
Below: *The Battle of Talas inadvertently instigated the introduction of papermaking to the Middle East. Below, a manuscript written during the Abbasid Era.*



Above: *The Talas River, located in present-day Kazakhstan, was the site of a battle that has had lasting influence in the influence of Islam Central Asia.*

## Aftereffects: Paper

The Battle of Talas was not viewed as particularly important in its day, but with the clarity of hindsight it was clearly significant for three major reasons: first, it stopped Tang expansion westward into Central Asia; second, it fortified Abbasid Muslim control of Central Asia; and third, it brought papermaking to the Middle East. In a surprising turn of events, Tang prisoners taken captive by the Abbasids during the Battle of Talas ended up introducing papermaking technology into the Abbasid Caliphate. This third impact, which scarcely had any immediate political or military impact, may have been the most significant result of the battle. While paper had been known throughout the Middle East, paper production was new and developed rapidly in Baghdad, from where it spread to Abbasid Spain. Paper eventually began to replace parchment as a medium for textual production in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Europe, allowing for larger-scale book production.





# BORDER CONTROL

The first half of the eighth century saw tremendous prosperity in China. It was unparalleled in the world at the time. The Tang capital, Chang’An, was a truly international city with merchants and musicians from all over Asia and Europe. However, such prosperity always comes to an end. The Tang had large borders and needed to create innovative ways of protecting these borders. So they employed border dwellers from one part of the empire to protect borders in other parts. Under these circumstances, Turkic peoples from the western lands might be employed to protect the north and northeastern borders.



Archer depicted in the Tang Dynasty’s characteristic Sancai technique, thought to be reserved for burial ware of the aristocracy.

## The Fame of Poetry

The first half of the eighth century in Tang Dynasty China is perhaps best known for the poetry it produced. Even today, poets such as Li Bai, Du Fu, and Wang Wei are read in schools all across China. Li Bai (Li Po) and Du Fu both lived through the An Lushan Rebellion, the ends of their careers marred by the difficult circumstances they faced. Although the An Lushan Rebellion brought about serious destabilization of the Tang, marking an end to an earlier era of artistic production and prosperity, the tale of Yang Guifei and her beauty served as the inspiration for artistic works for centuries, all the way down to the present day. She is considered one of China’s four great beauties.

## PALACE INTRIGUE

An Lushan was a Uyghur Turk who became a commander in the north. He was also a brilliant military leader and earned the favor of the emperor, with whom he became close. At the court of the emperor in Chang’An, An Lushan also became close with Yang Guifei, the emperor’s consort. Yang Guifei was a famed beauty and the favorite of the emperor. She enjoyed not only the emperor’s affection, but also his favor when it came to discussing matters of state. Members of the government became jealous of her position of power. Their jealousy also extended to An Lushan. As a result, these officials began propagating rumors that An Lushan and Yang Guifei were carrying on an illicit relationship.

## THE BEGINNING OF A REBELLION

Although the emperor did not initially believe these rumors, the officials were so persistent that he called An Lushan back to the capital from the north. An Lushan, having heard news of what was afoot in the capital, was reluctant to go. When he did at last, he brought his entire army with him. This was seen as a rebellion, and An Lushan fought several battles on his way to the capital. The same brilliance as a military leader that had won him favor at the Tang imperial court now won him only fear. He obtained victory after victory and marched toward Chang’An, but the emperor and his officials—along with Yang Guifei—had fled to the south and west.

## END OF AN ERA

The emperor’s men then clamored for the death of his favorite consort. There was no choice. The emperor allowed Yang Guifei to be strangled because of the strife that was attributed to her. Both the emperor and An Lushan died within a couple of years of the rebellion breaking out in 755, and the fighting continued between their heirs. The rebellion did not come to a close until 763, when peace was restored. The conflict had, however, wreaked havoc throughout the country and brought an end to the era of stability and prosperity that had preceded it.



Above: The faces of the terrracotta warriors are all unique. Studies show that eight face molds were used, then clay was added after to create individual features and expressions.

Below: The only surviving example of Li Bai’s calligraphy, the Shangyangtai.



Right: The story of Yang Guifei has been told many times. According to some she is a scapegoat, to others, she is the cause of misfortune.





# SONG DYNASTY

Following a sixty-year period of warfare, called the Five Dynasties, one particularly ambitious general mutinied, seized the regional capital of Dongjing, and installed himself as Emperor Taizu of the Song Dynasty. The Song Dynasty would last from 960 to 1279, and, although it is recognized for its artistic, technological, and commercial achievements, the dynasty had few years of peace. The first 167 years of the dynasty are called the Northern Song, with a capital at Kaifeng. China had lost territory during the Five Dynasties and the early years of the dynasty to the newly organized states of Liao, established 916, and Xia, established 1038.

## SILVER AND SILK

Beginning in 979, Song armies invaded Liao territories several times, aiming particularly for Yanjing (Beijing), the Liao capital. In 999, Liao forces countered these attacks, advancing as far as Changzhou in 1004, less than seventy miles from Kaifeng. They withdrew only when Song agreed to pay annual installments of silver and silk. No sooner did warfare with Liao cease than war with Xia began. Near-constant border clashes from 1039 to 1044 went badly for the Song despite an army numbering 1.25 million, and Song lost control of the Ordos Desert. A 1044 peace treaty—Song started paying silver and silk to the Xia, as well—lasted until 1081, when Song attacked and seized Lanzhou.

## YEARS OF WAR AND STRIFE

Subsequent wars in 1091 to 1093, 1096 to 1099, and 1115 to 1119 accomplished little. By the twelfth century, a people called the Heishui, Nüzhen, or Juchen had united in Liao's east.

	OPENNESS
907–979	Five Dynasties/Ten Kingdoms
916	Abaoji establishes Khitan Kingdom at Shangjing
947	Khitan Kingdom changes name to Liao
960	Zhao Kuangyin (Later Zhou general) mutinies at Chenqiao; seizes power at Dongjing; establishes Song Dynasty (Northern)
960–1004	(unknown) two Song campaigns against Liao
1004	(autumn) Liao invades Song as far as Chanzhou, within striking distance of Kaifeng (Song capital)
1005	Song agrees to send silver and silk annually to Liao; Liao army withdraws
1038	Xia king Yuanhao proclaims himself emperor of Greater (Western) Xia, capital at Xingqing (Yinchuan)
1038–	Warfare between Song and Xia
11th century	(prob. Late?) Nüzhen/Heishui/Juchen tribes unite, invade Liao
1115	Juchen chief Wanyan Aguda establishes Jin Dynasty
1125	Juchens capture Liao emperor; Liao Dynasty ends
1125	*winter) Jin Dynasty invades Song
1126	(spring) Jin army crosses Yellow River, besieges Dongjing
1127	Jin army sacks Dongjing, captures emperor, emperor's father, and 3000 prisoners: end Northern Song
1127	Emperor's brother names himself emperor Gaozong, moves capital to Hangzhou: Southern Song
1127–29	Chinese people fight Jin
1129	Jin crosses Yangtze
1129	Siege at Huangtiandang: Han Shizhong defeats Jin
1129	General Yue Fei recaptures Jiankang from Jin
1140	Jin invades Southern Song again
1142	Southern Song and Jin sign peace agreement; Song as vassal, pay tribute of silk and silver, boundary fixed
After 1234	(Mongols crush Jin): Song reclaims Kaifeng and Luoyang briefly only to lose them to the Mongols
1161–1162	Jin invasion
1206	Song declares war on Jin; Jin forces cross border (Huai River) and take several fortresses in southern Shaanxi
1208	Jin victorious; new peace treaty
1227	Xia falls to the Mongols
1234	Jin falls to the Mongols
1279	Prime Minister Lu Xiufu jumps with child emperor from Yashan Mountain into ocean: end of Song

Incursions began in 1102. In 1115 their chief declared himself emperor of the Jin Dynasty. In 1125 the Jin captured the Liao emperor. Initially Song supported them, but in the winter of 1125, the Jin armies, instead of stopping with Liao, kept marching into Song territory. At Dongjing, which fell in 1127, they captured the emperor and the emperor's father, thus ending the Northern Song.

## TREATIES MADE AND BROKEN

The emperor's brother proclaimed himself emperor and moved the capital to Hangzhou. Ordinary Chinese armed themselves and fought the Jin armies for the next two years. By the time the Jin crossed the Yangtze in 1129, the Southern Song were ready. Heavily besieged at Huangtiandang for forty-eight days, the defenses held and the Jin advance halted. The Jin broke an 1138 peace treaty the following year. This pattern—treaties made and broken—continued until 1208, when Jin won the final war.

## A NEW FOE

All three dynasties, however—Xia, Jin, and Southern Song—were about to crumble in the face of their new foe, the Mongols. These far-raiding horsemen killed the last Xia emperor in 1227 and the last Jin emperor in 1234. Song held out until 1279, when the last emperor, a child, was borne to an honorable death by his loyal prime minister, Lu Xiufu, who jumped with the emperor clinging to his back into the ocean following defeat at the Battle of Canton Bay.



Left: *From the eleventh century, Trip of the Emperor Minghuang after Shu.*



Below: *Map showing the beginning of the Song Dynasty, known as the Northern Song.*



*This painting depicts Emperor Taizu with his minister, Zhao Pu.*

Below: *Emperor Taizu came from a fairly humble background and trained as a child in the military arts. He is said to have displayed remarkable endurance and strength at a young age.*



## Unequal Armies

Although the population of China vastly outnumbered that of their northern foes, they only seemed capable of holding their own. The “barbarians” were successful against the Chinese because of their nomadic life, spent on horseback. In 1207, the population of Jin stood just shy of 54 million while China's numbered more than 100 million. Nonetheless, in 1159, the Jin took 560,000 horses into battle, three times the size of Song's cavalry. In northern China, the advantage lay with the horses, but part of the reason the Jin stalled in central China was the increasingly watery terrain, which did not suit their tactics.







# WAR OF THE GODS

In many of the world's cultures, the celestial battles of gods are as important to the earthly kingdoms as the terrestrial battles with enemies. Often, the distinction between gods and human beings is not as clear as it is in modern Western society. Despite common origins for many features of Indo-European pantheons, Central Asia saw an interesting syncretism due to the military history of the region. Greek language and culture brought by Alexander the Great and solidified by the later Hellenic kingdoms of West and Central Asia mixed with Persian and Indian culture, and religion.



Above: *Hindu god Arjuna, shown here with Hanuman, is a hero of the epic Mahabharata, and is considered the finest warrior and a peerless archer.*

Opposite: *In ancient Greek mythology, Zeus, King of the gods (Jupiter is his counterpart in ancient Roman mythology), is known to strike his opponents with his thunderbolt.*

Below: *Thor, of Norse mythology, is renowned for his supernatural warrior skills in fierce battles. His weapon of choice is a mountain-crusher hammer known as Mjölner.*



## THE YELLOW EMPEROR

In China, the first of the five legendary emperors was Huang di, or the Yellow Emperor, who appears in later Chinese writings both as an emperor who founded the Han civilization, and as a divine figure. He is often credited with the invention of Chinese medicine, and some legends claim he himself attained immortality. His victory at the Battle of Zhuolu—most likely a mythical conflict—set the stage for the Han Chinese. Huang di fought this battle against Chi You, leader of the Hmong and Jiuli. After suffering some initial setbacks because of heavy fog over the battlefield, the Yellow Emperor used one of his inventions—a device that always pointed in the same direction called the “South-Pointing Chariot”—to maintain a consistent orientation during the battle, thereby claiming victory. Chinese historians place the battle sometime in the twenty-sixth century BC.

## INDIAN GODS

In India, the gods often took part in worldly affairs, such as the famous involvement of Krishna in Arjuna's battles in the Bhagavadgita. Indra, the god of war, is often depicted in largely human terms, and in one story even becomes involved in earthly affairs when he is trapped in the body of a pig and forgets his true identity as a god. Indra, as part of a larger Indo-European tradition, is similar in form and almost certainly related in origin to other gods of thunder and war, such as Zeus in the Greek tradition and Thor in the Germanic tradition. The later Germanic tradition explains the Norse deities as originally human kings and warriors who through military greatness achieved divine status. The Germanic heaven, Valhalla, was a place where warriors would go after death to fight and hack each other to pieces during the day, only to come back alive at night to feast and drink in the great hall. This elaborate setup was all in preparation for a final battle between gods and giants at Ragnarok.

## FUSION OF RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

The importance of Central Asia as a trade route brought about a continued development and mixing of various religious traditions, including the conception of deities. The martial traditions of mankind have at times and in certain locales become so advanced and esoteric in training—often accompanied by spiritual dimensions of mental and psychic training—that those warriors highly trained in certain martial traditions have attained capabilities beyond those of the average person. The quest for skill and strength in the martial arts has often led to a conceptual blurring of boundaries between the human and the divine.



Left: *A detail from a relief depicting the twelve Olympian gods. The gods were Hestia, Hermes, Aphrodite, Ares, Demeter, Hephaestus, Hera, Poseidon, Athena, Zeus, Artemis, and Apollo.*



# THE KIEVAN RUS NINTH–THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

According to legend, the scattered Slavic tribes along the Volga and Dnieper invited the Swedish king, Rurik, and his brothers to unite and rule over them. The Norsemen—particularly a group known as the “Rus”—had already established a presence along these waterways as they made their way to Miklagarth, the Old Norse name for Constantinople, meaning “Great City.” Norse mercenaries served in the Byzantine military in such large numbers that an elite force, known as the Varangian Guard, was formed from their ranks. They were famous for their military might and skill, as well as for their use of axes in battle.

### A Traveler’s Tale

Ibn Fadlan, an Arab traveler, wrote about the Norsemen he encountered along the Volga, noting their height, fair complexion, and carefully combed hair. He described a ship burial of a Norse king on the Volga in which the king was laid out in the ship and burned. The Rus were also described by Persian traveler, Ibn Rustah, who depicted the Norse as town builders who lived off plundering, but who treated their slaves well and with respect, and who adorned themselves with rich clothes and jewelry.

Below: *Map showing the principalities of Kievan Rus (1054–1132).*



### NORSE RULE

Rurik’s brothers died, but Rurik himself established Novgorod as the capital of the new realm. For generations, a Norse-speaking elite ruled over the Slavic peoples along the Volga and Dnieper, though the capital moved to Kiev in modern-day Ukraine. In the 860s the Rus attacked Constantinople by surprise, raiding and pillaging the areas around the great city with some 200 ships. The emperor was engaged elsewhere at the time fighting Arabs and Normans and was not able to defend the city. While documentation about the attack is limited, and no one knows exactly how much damage the Norsemen did and the exact circumstances under which they left, the attack was a tremendous blow to the powerful Byzantine Empire. Had the emperor been there with his navy, the Rus might have been deterred by the famous Greek fire.

### RUS MILITARY MIGHT

In 976, Vladimir the Great, a descendent of Rurik, was forced to flee to Sweden, where he called on old family ties to gather the strength to retake Kiev, which he did with great success. Vladimir the Great converted the Rus to Orthodox Christianity in 987 and married the sister of Basil II of Constantinople in what must have been a shocking acknowledgement of Rus power by the Byzantine Empire. Vladimir’s son, Yaroslav the Wise, continued to steer the Rus through strong military might and even set the groundwork for the Rus legal system.

### A NEW STYLE OF COMBAT

The Rus did not fight from horseback originally; rather, they learned this style of combat as styles shifted across Europe and they came in contact with the horse archers of the steppes. In early interactions with horse archers, the Rus had trouble dealing with their different conventions of honor and military engagement. The Rus originally used the same weaponry and tactics as their Scandinavian kinsmen. They were protected by round shields and chain mail or lamellar armor and conical helmets, and carried spears, pattern welded swords, long daggers, and axes. They were widely known and respected for their strength and skill both as individual fighters and as military strategists. The Norsemen’s protein-rich northern diet of meat, fish, and dairy also made them bigger and taller on average than the peoples of southern Europe at the time.



*Bronze cathedral doors stolen by the Novgorodians from Sweden in 1187.*



*Above middle: Rurik, founder of the Rurik Dynasty, remained in power until his death in 879. He established the capital Novgorod but later his successors moved it to Kiev.*

*Above: Rurik and his brothers Truvor and Sineus arrive in Staraya Ladoga, one of the most important early trading ports of Eastern Europe.*



# THE NOVGOROD REPUBLIC

Although the Rus moved their capital to Kiev in 882, Novgorod was still known as the historic capital and remained an important symbol of the Rus Kingdom. The Kievan Rus declined in power in the early twelfth century and in 1136 Novgorod established an elective monarchy. The new republic coexisted with Kiev for some time, but eventually the power of the Rus increasingly shifted away from Kiev to Novgorod.

## EAST AND WEST

The Novgorod Republic existed at an important crossroad in time and place. To the west, the Catholic countries of Europe were engaged in Crusade; to the east, the Mongol Hordes were storming across the steppes. The Rus of Novgorod won fame in their military dealings on both fronts.



Above: *The Novgorod Republic within Kievan Rus.*

Below: Martha the Mayoress at the Destruction of the Novgorod Veche, by Klavdiy Lebedev.

On the eastern front, Novgorod did not have the means to withstand the force and power of the Mongols as they swept across the globe. Novgorod became a vassal state, but maintained its independent leadership. On the western front, Novgorod had many battles against the Swedes and Germans, who engaged in northern crusades against non-Christians and the Orthodox Christians of Novgorod.

## THE LEGENDARY NEVSKY

Among the most famous leaders of the Rus of Novgorod was Alexander Nevsky, who defended the realm with dignity and wisdom, and laid the groundwork for later expansion eastward. Nevsky knew that conflict with the Mongols was doomed to failure, so he maintained cordial relations with the Mongols. He was actually a favored vassal of Batu Khan of the Golden Horde, who was instrumental in Nevsky's installation on the throne of Novgorod after Nevsky's brother, Andrew, conspired against the Mongols. Nevsky refused to fight with the Mongols and maintained good relations with them, despite strong anti-Mongol sentiments in Novgorod.

Alexander Nevsky's name lives on as one of the greatest rulers and military commanders of all time. He made his name by leading a small but victorious army of Rus against the invading Swedes at the Neva River in 1240 at the age of just nineteen. Despite his victory, Nevsky was banished from Novgorod because of disputes with the Boyars, but he was later called back to defend the city from the invading Teutonic Knights. He led the Rus to victory in the famous Battle of the Ice in 1242 against the Teutonic Knights. The battle is famously portrayed in Sergei Eisenstein's film *Alexander Nevsky*.

Nevsky—himself descended from the old Norse ruling elite—became a ruler of incredible might and wisdom. Never defeated, he was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in the sixteenth century.



*Although Alexander Nevsky was the fourth son of Prince Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, he proved himself a natural leader.*

## The Furry of the North

Novgorod's wealth came from the fur trade. Reports from merchants indicate an amazing abundance of high-quality furs, which were sold or exchanged throughout the western countries of Europe. The income enabled Novgorod to maintain its government and military strength.

Novgorod continued as the seat of power for two centuries after Nevsky, but several other centers of power began to fight for dominance. Moscow won an important victory at the Battle of Shelon River in 1471 and in 1478 sacked Novgorod, shifting the power of Russia to the rising Muscovite Kingdom.





# IVAN THE TERRIBLE

Although Ivan IV of Russia was a great and brilliant leader, he was named the “Terrible”—“grozny” in Russian—because he suffered from bouts of mental illness and paranoia that resulted in irrational and often violent behavior, including the killing of his firstborn son and heir during an argument.



Above: *An example of Russian atrocities of the XVI century: using women as target practice.*

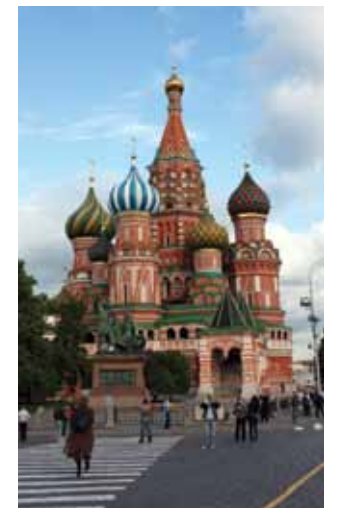
## Mental Instability

Even as Ivan took control of the kingdom he had built during his reign, he gradually lost control of himself and succumbed to the mental instability that plagued him. In 1581 he struck his son and heir with a rod during a fit of rage, killing him. The death left Russia without a strong and competent leader and proved to be the end of the line of Rurik, which had ruled the Rus since the first kingdom in Novgorod.

Ivan greatly expanded the domain of what was to become Russia, but he set a precedent of brutal authority. During his tyrannical rule he destabilized the government, leaving Moscow in a weak and unstable position, despite the size of its new territory.



Left: *Painting by Ilya Repin depicting Ivan IV with his dying son.*



Above: *Saint Basil's Cathedral in Red Square marks the geometric center of Moscow.*

## THE MAKING OF A CZAR

In 1564—because of conflict among his commanders and strife with the Boyars—Ivan abdicated the throne, although he was later recrowned by the Boyars. He took the opportunity to negotiate complete control over a region he called the Oprichnina. The rest of Russia, called the Zemshchina, was controlled by the Boyars. This system was short-lived and dissolved in 1572, but its effects lasted much longer. Ivan's efforts to create a social elite that was dependent on the sovereign power of the state was the beginning of the new czardom of Russia. He became czar of the Rus—a title derived from cesar—and so began a new era for Russia in which the sovereign held tremendous power over the whole dominion and its subjects, for good and for ill.

Ivan personally headed an army against the Tatars of Kazan, and upon victory famously commissioned the building of St. Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow, known for its distinctive and colorful style.

Shortly thereafter, Russia annexed the Khanate of Astrakhan, giving it control of the trade routes to the Caspian Sea. The Cossacks were instrumental in the conquest of the Khanate of Sibir (present-day Siberia). They established outposts throughout Siberia to control the region and won strategic victories that gave Moscow control of an enormous territory. The eastern edge of Siberia would remain an area of contention, but the main territory stretching across Asia was now firmly under Russian control.

Below: *Detail of map from 1514 showing the region to the west and north of the Black Sea.*

## MUSCOVITE RULE

Ivan the Terrible ruled with an iron fist. He led the massive expansion of Muscovite Russia, especially after Mongol domination began to wane. He sought to expand his territory westward to the Baltic through the protracted Livonian War for twenty-five years, beginning in the late 1550s. Ultimately unsuccessful, he was never able to break the staunch opposition of the Swedes, Lithuanians, and Poles. Campaigns elsewhere met with greater success, and he brought the Khanate of Kazan under his rule in 1552.





# THE CONQUEST OF SIBERIA SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The conquest of Siberia took place during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, who led a massive expansionist movement. With the annexation of Siberia to the east, Russia began to look as it does today.

The Mongol Empire—once the world’s largest contiguous empire—began to fragment following the death of Genghis Khan amid struggles over succession. The empire nonetheless remained intact for decades, most of it remaining under Mongol and Turkic control. By the sixteenth century, however, the power of the steppes had diminished. Siberia—the land east of Ural Mountains—was an enormous territory controlled by the Tatar leader Kuchum. Siberia, known as the Khanate of Sibir, was filled with barren tracks of land, forest, and swamp.



## Bringing a Bow to a Gun Fight

In warfare, technology was on the side of the Cossacks. The competitive advantage of the Mongols—the bow shot from horseback—was no longer a differentiating factor in battle. Firearms largely decided the victory, and the Cossacks fought with guns against Mongols armed with bows and arrows. That is not to say that the Khanate did not possess firearms, but that many of the soldiers had never fought against an opponent armed with firearms and were accustomed only to archery. Some wore a kind of lamellar armor made from boiled and hardened leather and wood, obviously ineffective against firepower. In addition, the Cossacks were professional soldiers and horsemen who were accustomed to strategic fighting, an advantage that also worked in their favor.

## COSSACK INVASION

It was Yermak Timoveyevich who led the Cossacks eastward into Siberia. The Cossacks established forts throughout the region without the permission of the khan. At the same time, they worked to win over the local population and persuaded them to show allegiance to Moscow. At the Battle of Qashliq in 1582, Timoveyevich won a crucial victory at what was the capital of the khanate of Sibir at the time. He and his men destroyed the city.

Kuchum eventually lost everything. He was offered a position in Moscow by Ivan the Terrible, but preferred to live out his life among his people, rather than suffer the indignity of life in Moscow under the rule of his opponent.

## SMALL FIGHTING FORCE

The conquest of Siberia was remarkable, particularly taking into account the size of the landmass conquered and the number of people involved in the fighting. Fighting forces were quite small compared to other expeditions of the period. For instance, Ivan IV led more than 100,000 troops against the Tatars of Kazan, while the Cossacks who moved east into Siberia numbered in the hundreds or perhaps thousands. The Cossacks were so successful for two reasons: they were superbly trained and the territories they invaded were sparsely populated and controlled by a just handful of leaders. Small battles and victories determined the fate of large swaths of land.

Below: *Yermak Timoveyevich led the Russian conquest of Siberia, which expanded Russia all the way to the Bering Strait.*

Below: *Vasily Surikov's oil on canvas titled, The Conquest of Siberia by Yermak.*



Above: *River routes that were of primary importance in the conquest of Siberia.*





# THREE KINGDOMS

At the start of the second century BC the dominant power on the Korean Peninsula was Gojoseon. As the century came to a close Gojoseon collapsed and fragmented under pressure from invasion by the Han Dynasty of China. The result was destabilization and local resistance to the Han. In the wake of the political collapse, several kingdoms vied for power in what is now Korea, giving rise to a proto-Three Kingdoms period. Over the next two centuries, three major powers would emerge: Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla.



*An inner golden cap for a Crown of Silla from the sixth century.*



*Above: Stele commemorating the expedition of King Jinheung of Silla who was responsible for the expansion of Silla's territory.*

## UNIFYING THE PENINSULA

During the long course of their coexistence, the three kingdoms fought and allied with each other at various points. The largest of the three kingdoms was Goguryeo, and its most famous leader was King Gwanggaeto (Kwanggaet'o) the Great of Goguryeo (Koguryō). In the fifth century he greatly expanded the territory of Goguryeo and loosely unified the three kingdoms by making both Silla and Baekje vassal states. Silla submitted willingly to gain support from the more powerful Goguryeo in defense against Baekje.

In addition to the three kingdoms was another, smaller territory called Gaya, a confederacy that was located in the south between Silla and Baekje. After Silla submitted to Goguryeo, Gwanggaeto—known for his military skill and strategy—defeated the Japanese, Baekje, and Gaya forces that threatened Silla. At the time, Silla was known as Saro, but would later come to be called “Silla” and would go on to conquer the whole peninsula.

## PLOWSHARES INTO WEAPONS

At the start of the period the weaponry used consisted primarily of bronze daggers and spears; most tools and weapons were made of wood or bronze, until the Han Chinese introduced iron. The introduction of iron allowed for improvements in weaponry, tool-making, and agriculture. As in other parts of the world, technological advances ushered in greater food production, increasing the wealth of the ruling elite and funding military expeditions. War always falls on the backs of farmers, for they generate the wealth needed to wage large wars and, in large wars, their fields are trampled beneath the hooves of horses bred by their own kinsmen.

The Three Kingdoms period ended in the latter half of the seventh century. The Silla allied with Tang Dynasty China and conquered Baekje in 660 and Goguryeo in 668. The kingdom of Silla had unified the Korean peninsula.

## MAKING A HORN BOW

During this period, warriors wore lamellar armor, carried swords and spears, and practiced horse archery with horn bows. Difficult, time-consuming, and expensive to produce, horn bows are made of a composite of horn, sinew, and wood. They bend forward into a complete hoop when unstrung and must be specially strung so that they bend the limbs all the way back around without twisting them, since such torque causes damage. These bows were short, but incredibly powerful and capable of sending arrows several hundred yards. Arrows were made of bamboo and also involved intricate processes of production.



*Above: Tomb of the General, also known as Pyramid of the East, is thought to be the burial place of either King Gwanggaeto or King Jangsū, of the Kingdom of Goguryeo.*

*Below: Built in 528, the Bulguksa temple is a beautiful example of the golden age of Buddhist art from the Silla era.*



*Above: North Korean stamps issued in 1977 feature goldwork from the Goguryeo Kingdom.*





# KOGURYO-CHINA WARS

Koguryo, a nation based in northern Korea, rose to power during the first several centuries AD, emerging dominant from a struggle with other Korean nations to its south, China to its west, and nomadic peoples to its north. It reached its peak under King Gwanggaeto and King Jangsu, who moved the capital from Kungnae-song (T'ungkou) to Pyongyang. Gwanggaeto. According to his own propaganda, he conquered sixty-four fortresses and 1,400 towns. He seized the Liaotung Peninsula, occupied by China, Sushen nomad-occupied Manchuria in the northwest, and Paekche as far as the Han River to the south.



*Empress Wu began as a consort but eventually ruled as effective sovereign.*

## ACROSS THE LIAO

In AD 589, China finally reunited under Wendi, first emperor of the Sui Dynasty. In 598, Koguryo raided Liao-his, a Chinese territory. Wendi responded with a large army of his own, sending 300,000 men across the Liao River toward Pyongyang with a fleet for support. Heavy rains and storms rendered the roads muddy and the fleet helpless. The Chinese, harried continuously by Koguryo forces, retreated.

## A TRAP

In 612, Wendi's son, Emperor Yangti, marshaled a force of incredible size and attacked Koguryo. First he made for the fortress of Liaotung (modern Liaoyang), which so stubbornly resisted siege that the emperor sent 305,000 under the command of General Yu Chong Sheng to Pyongyang. They never arrived. Koguryo general, Ulchi Mundok, lured them into a trap at the Salsu (Chongchon) River, from which only 2,700 Chinese soldiers escaped. Following this disaster, the siege of Liaotung was quickly abandoned, but Yangti returned in 613. He finally managed to reach Pyongyang; still, nothing came of the invasion.

## THE LAST STAND OF KOGURYO

The Sui Dynasty crumbled in 618, due in part to the Koguryo disasters, but the Tang Dynasty that replaced it didn't feel any less animosity toward its Korean neighbor. In 645, Emperor Taizong invaded. He managed a victory at Liaotung, but failed to capture the minor fortress at Anshi (Yingchengtzu), despite a sixty-day siege with up to seven assaults a day. When winter began to descend, Taizong retreated; his second attempt, in 647, also failed.

## DEFYING THE CHINESE

Not until 668, when the remarkable Empress Wuhou ruled the empire (in fact, if not in name) did China finally succeed in conquering Koguryo, thanks to an alliance with the Silla kingdom. Despite its eventual fall, Koguryo's defiance of the invading Chinese remains a source of great significance and pride for Koreans today—as does Silla's unification of the Korean peninsula, pushing out the Tang in 676.



## Empress of China

Wuhou, also called Wu Zhao, Wu Zetian, or simply Wu, started her life at the Tang court at the age of fourteen in 638. She was then a fifth-ranked concubine. Her remarkable and unique climb to power as China's only empress began when she won the attentions of Gaozong, Emperor Taizong's heir. Upon his ascension to the throne in 649, Gaozong, against custom, kept her as a consort and, in 655—possibly by murdering Gaozong's infant and blaming his wife—she usurped the title of empress for herself. By 660, Gaozong had suffered the first of several strokes, which, combined with a fundamentally weak character, left an opportunity Wuhou was all too ready to seize. Deftly disposing of critics and rivals, Wuhou took over the court, literally ruling from behind the scenes at first (decorum demanded that she sit behind a screen when speaking with officials), and then officially seizing power in a bloodless coup in 690. The "Zhou Dynasty" lasted only until her abdication in 705, when, at the age of eighty, she finally relinquished power to Gaozong's son, Zhongzong.



*Left: Emperor Taizong tried twice to conquer Koguryo but failed both times.*

*Above: Three Kingdoms of Korea, at the end of the 5th century*

*Below: Emperor Yangti was unsuccessful in his attempts to conquer Koguryo.*





# THE RISE OF SILLA

In the late seventh century Silla emerged as the dominant power on the Korean peninsula. With the aid of the Tang Dynasty, Silla managed to conquer its neighbors, Gaya, Baekje, and Goguryeo, thus ending the Three Kingdoms Period (not to be confused with the three kingdoms period of China in the third century AD). From the sixth century onward, Silla rose in power. In 562, it conquered the neighboring state of Gaya, a small confederacy on the southern tip of the peninsula. In 660, Silla formed an alliance with Tang Dynasty China and overran Baekje. Eight years later, it annexed its large northern neighbor Goguryeo, thus unifying the three kingdoms.



## Flower Boys

An aristocratic military elite, known as the Hwarang, evolved among the Silla. It is unclear what exactly the Hwarang were in their original inception, since the name is typically translated as “flower boys” and may refer to clubs of young aristocratic boys chosen for their beauty and designed to foster learning and promote morality. Many speculate as to the potential homosexuality of the group. Toward the end of the Three Kingdoms, however, the Hwarang began to practice military arts, and soon the Hwarang were required to learn all the martial arts, from swordsmanship to archery to equestrian sports. Whatever their previous status may have been—and whatever their subsequent status became—the Hwarang were young, male, aristocratic warriors highly trained in martial arts. During the reign of the Silla it became an organized group that fostered future military and political leaders. Today a resurrected form of these arts is taught and practiced under the name Hwarang-do.

*Above: A Sillan sculpture depicting a horse-headed warrior with a flaming sword. The horse was revered in Sillan culture symbolized its military might.*

*Right: The boundaries of Silla in AD 576. In the seventh century AD, Silla conquered Baekje and annexed Goguryeo.*



*Above: The Sillan “Heavenly Horse” tomb depicts a white horse believed to represent the Guatama Buddha’s horse, Kanthaka.*

## FRIEND OR FOE?

Having relied heavily on the aid of the Tang Dynasty to conquer its neighbors, Silla faced a dilemma in the wake of its military success: What to do with its Tang allies? The Tang, of course, wanted to claim the lands in the newly conquered territories. Munmun, king of Silla, had led the unification. Tang troops helped defeat the kingdom of Baekje, and a strong Tang military presence was thereby established in Baekje. When Munmun turned his attention to his much larger neighbor to the north, Goguryeo, to whom Silla had once been a vassal state, he again achieved victory thanks to Tang support. The alliance with the Tang, however, soon soured. Tang forces began quarreling with Silla over holdings in Goguryeo, and planned to make Silla a vassal state. Munmun expelled the Tang from Baekje and formed an alliance with the recently defeated Goguryeo to push back Tang forces pressing in on the borders from China. The defeat of the Tang was crucial to the rise of Silla.



# JAPANESE AND MANCHURIAN INVASIONS

The Korean peninsula was a land rich in natural resources and strategically located between the Empire of Japan in the east and China and Siberia in the west. It is not surprising that it attracted the attention of surrounding foreign powers for centuries. Emboldened by its unification, Japan launched a massive invasion in 1592 and again in 1597. Thirty years later, Huang Taiji of Manchuria launched the First Manchu Invasion in 1627 and returned for the Second Manchu Invasion in 1636.

## NEW WEAPONS OF WAR

After the partial unification of Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi led Japan into battle against Korea to expand its territorial holdings. The Korean Navy dominated the engagements, however. Led by Yi Sun-Sin, the Koreans made use of new “turtle ships,” swift gunships covered in iron plates that tore through the Japanese navy. With the strategic brilliance of the Korean fleet at sea and the staunch opposition on land, the intervention of the Ming Dynasty brought a swift end to this initial invasion.

War stopped for several years, but the Japanese attempted a second invasion in 1597. Yi Sun-Sin led a combined Joseon and Ming force and defeated the Japanese Navy in the Battle of Noryang in 1598. For a time, Korea was safe.

## MANCHU DYNASTY

In 1627 Huang Taiji, also known as Abahai, led the Manchus in a series of invasions, first forcing the Joseon to abandon their alliance with the Ming and open trade. Korea was now in an awkward position with regard to the Ming, who had helped them repel the Japanese invasions just thirty years before. Huang Taiji continued his campaigns by taking control of China and establishing the Qing Dynasty. He then invaded a second

time in 1636 after Joseon refused to become a vassal state. The Manchus took control and made Joseon a vassal state regardless. Huang Taiji was a successful military and political leader; rather than imposing a government purely externally, he incorporated Chinese officials into his government, thereby allowing the Manchus to establish a lasting dynasty in China.

The Manchus spoke a Turkic language that is now all but extinct, rather than the Sino-Tibetan languages spoken on mainland China, which they conquered. Linguistically at least, they had more in common with the peoples of Korea.

For the Japanese, invading Korea led to crushing defeat; for the Manchus, it strengthened their position as they rose to dominance as the leaders of the Qing Empire.

## CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

Advanced technology helped the Koreans repel their Japanese invaders at the end of the sixteenth century. The so-called turtle ships—small, swift, armored ships covered in iron plating and loaded with canons—were highly maneuverable and could easily penetrate deep into an enemy navy. At the same time, their covering of spiked iron plates made them difficult to board or take down with arrow or gunfire.

Another significant invention was the hwacha, which could shoot a hundred rocket-propelled arrows at once. The hwacha consisted of a two-wheeled cart with a horizontal frame with holes for each of the arrows. During the Battle of Haengju, the Koreans were outnumbered nearly ten to one, but thanks to the hwacha, the Japanese were forced to retreat.



*Hong Taiji proclaimed himself emperor of the Qing dynasty in 1636 and reigned until 1643.*



*Above: The warrior Toyotomi Hideyoshi (c. 1536–1598) in his spectacular battle dress. He is renowned as the unifier of Japan.*



*Far left: Toyotomi Hideyoshi's spectacular armored headdress was designed to strike fear into his enemies.*

*Left: Map showing the two ill-conceived and unsuccessful Japanese invasions in Korea.*



# STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES

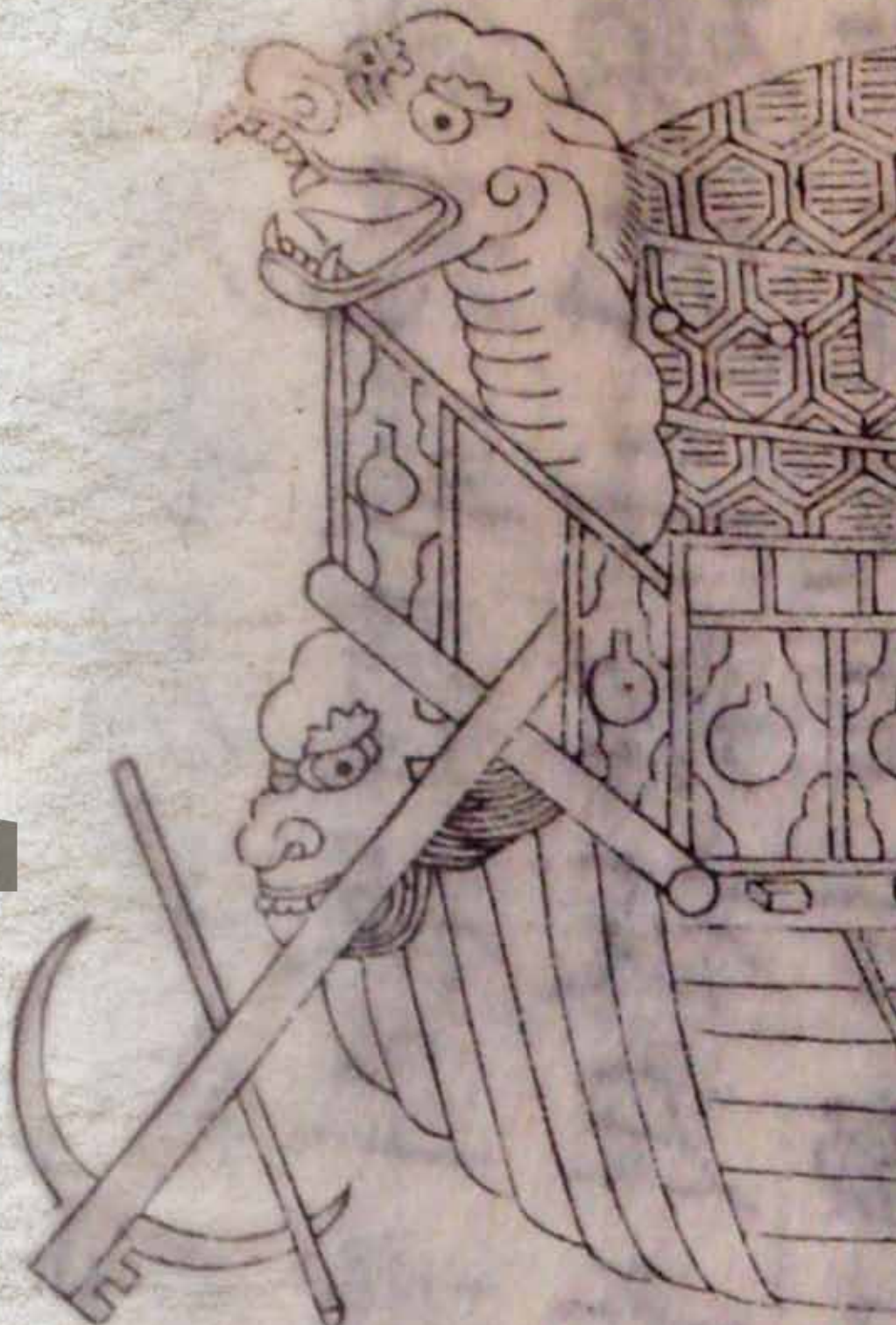
In combat, many factors can lend an advantage to one side. Perhaps a force is larger or better trained. Perhaps one side is weak from hunger and sickness, or emblazoned to protect kith and kin. One army may employ the terrain to a strategic advantage. However, as has often happened, a technological advantage can be decisive. The sling and stone took down Goliath. The English archers, although ill and vastly outnumbered, overcame the French at Agincourt because their arrows were strategically deployed in sawtooth formations. The horses of the Mongols allowed them to control the largest land empire the world has ever known.

## AN INNOVATIVE WARSHIP

When Japan launched an invasion of Korea in 1592, the Koreans were able to repel the attack in large part because of technological innovation. The turtle ships used by Admiral Yi Sun-sin were able to deal devastating blows to the Japanese navy. Built from heavy timber and intricately constructed with excellent joinery, these craft were built without metal nails and were far more solid than their Japanese counterparts. With two decks, one crew could propel the boat with oars from below, while another crew above manned the guns and defended the ship with arrows. It was mounted with cannons in the front, rear, and on the sides, and was capable of ramming enemy ships directly head on. Rather than launching cannonballs, these cannons launched iron-tipped wooden missiles with iron wings. Designed specifically to tear enemy ships to pieces, these missiles were heavy and struck at speeds over 200 mph.



Above: *The statue of Admiral Yi Sun-sin, in Seoul, South Korea. His turtle ships allowed him to dominate the seas.*



Below: *A 16th-century Korean turtle ship in a depiction dating to 1795. It is the earliest extant illustration of the turtle ship.*





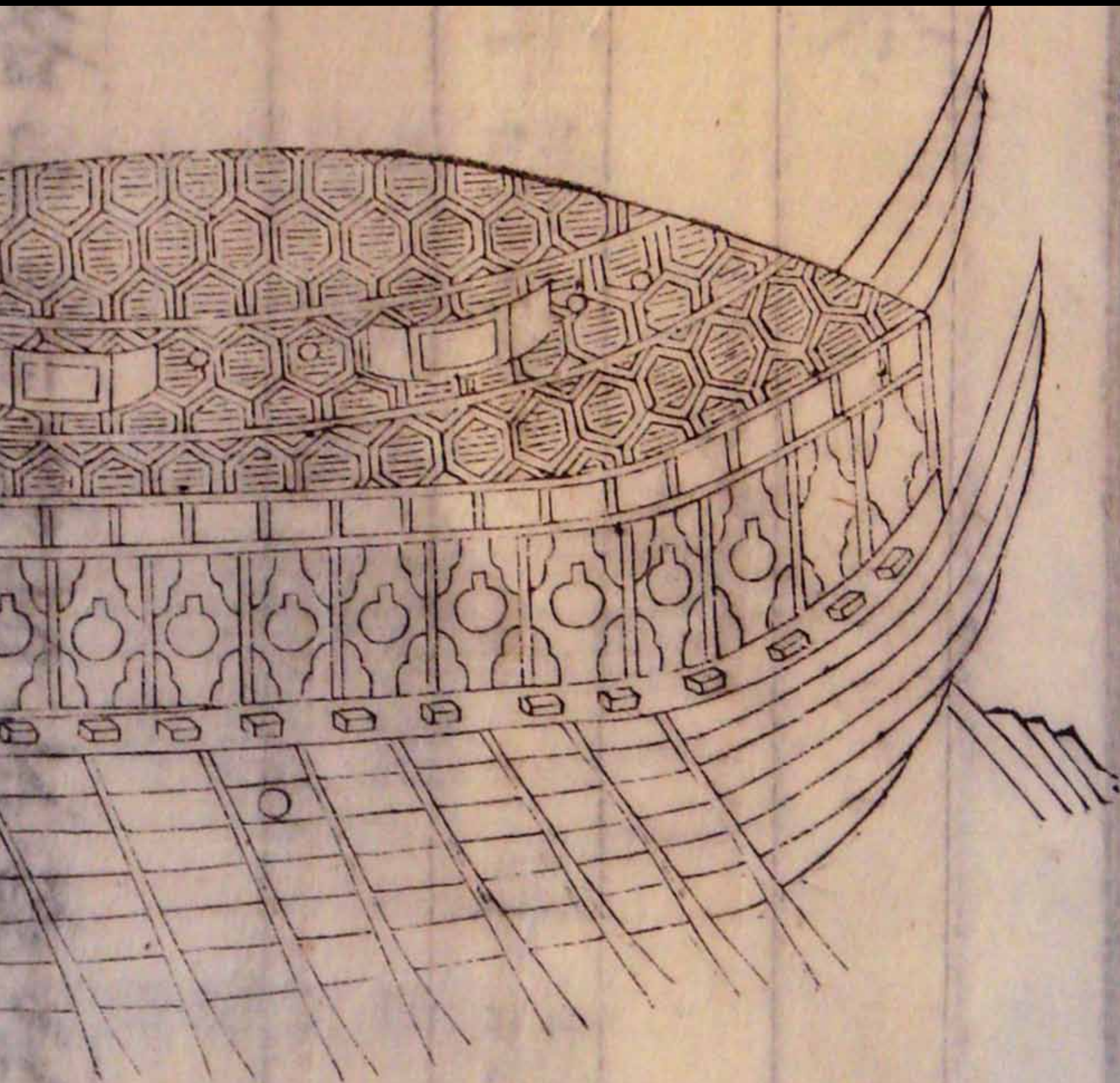
Above: *The formidable turtle ship with cannons mounted on all sides, and its shield of spiked metal to repel potential boarders.*

### SMALL BUT DEADLY

Perhaps most distinguishing, however, was the turtle ship's shell: the whole ship was covered with a solid roof of iron plates and spikes. The long spikes were concealed during attacks so as to be unseen by enemy warriors attempting to leap aboard. The ships were therefore nearly impossible to capture. They could disable ships at long range with their guns, but could not be boarded at close range. On account of their relatively small size and high degree of maneuverability and speed, the turtle ships could penetrate an enemy navy quickly, do significant damage, and return to safety with incredible speed.

### TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

Turtle ships were adorned with large dragonheads at the front of the ships. These appear to have been more than ornamental, however, and may have been used to direct noxious gases and chemicals at their opponents, provided they could harness the wind in the right direction. Turtle ships had so many different features in their technology that they could scarcely be outdone in battle at sea. The devastating naval defeats of the Japanese at the end of the sixteenth century can largely be attributed to these technological advantages. Meanwhile on land, use of rocket-propelled ballistics allowed the Koreans to repel much larger forces of invading Japanese.





# SAMURAI

By the twelfth century, when they are first mentioned in writing, the samurai class had coalesced into a distinct group of elite, seminoble warriors. The samurai followed a particular code known as *bushido*. This code of conduct both governed behavior off the field and regulated conduct on it through complex rituals of warfare. Samurai developed in the Heian Period (794–1185), and truly came into their own in the war that ended it and began the next phase of Japanese history, the Kamakura shogunate (1192–1333), an age of roaming samurai, warrior monks, and shoguns.

## THE GENPEI WAR

The Genpei War began in 1180 when Emperor Takakura abdicated, and Taira Kiyomori, the chief minister, appointed the emperor's two-year-old grandson as heir to the throne. Prince Minamoto Mochihito, however, staked his claim as emperor. Calling on the Minamoto clan to defend his right to the throne, Mochihito defied Taira's power, but found himself pursued to Miidera Temple, just outside Kyoto. With a band of warrior monks and the warrior, Minamoto no Yorimasa, Mochihito fled across the Uji River. Minamoto partisans rallied, but the conspirators' plans slipped out, and on June 20, 1180, a large Taira force caught Minamoto Yorimasa's tiny force of 300 at the Battle of Uji. Heroism on both sides resulted in a slaughter of the Minamoto, including the death of Mochichito. Rather than accept defeat, Yorimasa committed what is considered the ultimate example of *hara-kiri*: ritual suicide. These events sparked the massive armed conflict between the Taira and Minamoto clans.

## CATCHING THE SPARK

The spark had caught, and two of the younger Minamoto generation started to raise armies. One, Minamoto Yoshinaka, rampaged through Kozuke, Echigo, Etchu, Kaga, Echizen, and Wakasa in the summer of 1182, reaching striking distance of Kyoto. He paused, letting months of drought and plague weaken the city. Meanwhile, Yoshinaka's cousin, Minamoto Yoritomo, had raised a large army from his base at Kamakura. He seemed nearly as alarmed by Yoshinaka as the Taira.

Below: *In the second Battle of Uji (1184), Minamoto no Yoshitsune led his forces across the river to face the army of his cousin Yoshinaka.*

## THE TIDE TURNS

In 1183, a poorly trained Taira army of 100,000 set out to face Yoshinaka. The Taira forces won the first battle on May 20 at Hiuchi-yama, but suffered a disastrous defeat in June at the Battle of Kurikara. Yoshinaka harried them all the way back to Kyoto, taking the city on August 11.

## THE RISE OF MINAMOTO

This Minamoto victory proved to be a high-water mark because Yoshinaka then began to fall apart. Chasing the Taira into their homeland, he suffered bad defeats in November. One of his kinsmen deserted with his troops, and his boorish ways didn't earn him any friends in the capital. Sensing his opportunity, Yoritomo sent his army, under command of his brother, Minamoto Yoshinaka—one of the great figures of samurai legend—against Yoshinaka. The two Minamoto armies joined battle at Uji, where the war had begun four years earlier. Yoshinaka suffered a catastrophic defeat and died. The victorious Minamoto now moved to exterminate the Taira in their home territory, the Inland Sea. Numerous battles, in which the Taira enjoyed years of naval supremacy, culminated in the Battle of Dan no Ura, a pivotal moment in Japanese history. The Taira were ended; the little emperor, Kiyomori's grandson, drowned.



*Minamoto no Yorimasa (1106–1180) was a celebrated warrior and poet. His ritual suicide is the earliest recorded instance of a samurai's suicide in the face of defeat.*

## Fighting from horseback

Samurai used intricately crafted long asymmetrical bows made from bamboo. The bottom portion of the bow was shorter, allowing warriors to shoot from horseback. Bows were also drawn all the way back to the ear, requiring very long arrows.





# GENPEI WAR

Ruled by familial clans, Japan has been home to some of the world's most epic conflicts. Among the most famous in the nation's long military history was the Genpei War (also written "Gempei"). The Genpei War grew out of a long struggle between the two main governing families in Japan: the Taira, who were in control at the time, and the Minamoto, who claimed succession to the throne.



## Tales of Heroes

The story of the Genpei War is told in *Heike Monogatari* or *The Tale of Heike*. The word Heike refers to the Taira clan (similarly, the word Genpei comes from alternate readings of the Chinese characters in the names Taira and Minamoto, so it literally means the war between the Taira and Minamoto). The national identity of Japan is intimately tied to the Genpei War: red and white were colors of Taira and Minamoto and are now the colors of the Japanese flag.

*Portrait believed to represent Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147–1199). Yoritomo was the founder and first shogun of the Kamakura Shogunate, which he ruled from 1192, establishing the supremacy of the samurai warrior caste.*



Above: *Emperor Takakura (1161–1181) was the 80th Emperor of Japan. Disputes between rival warrior clans over succession following his abdication in 1180 sparked the Genpei Civil War.*

Below: *Map showing the many battles fought throughout Japan in the Genpei War. The war came to an end in 1185, following the battle of Dan-no-ura, one of the most famous and important battles in Japanese history.*



## OUTBREAK OF THE GENPEI WAR

After Emperor Takakura abdicated in 1180 the prime minister (from the Taira clan) appointed his two-year-old grandson as heir to the throne. Prince Minamoto Mochihito, however, staked his claim as emperor. Calling on the Minamoto clan to defend his right to the throne, Mochihito defied Taira power and was pursued to Miidera Temple just outside Kyoto. With a band of warrior monks and the warrior Minamoto no Yoritoma, Mochihito fled across the Uji River. Taira forces caught up with him and his companions there. The battle of Uji in 1180 is accordingly cited as the beginning of the Genpei War. Yoritoma committed suicide rather than accept defeat, and Mochihito was captured and later killed. This sparked the massive armed conflict between the Taira and Minamoto clans.

The tide of the battle eventually turned in 1183, primarily with the success of the Minamoto in the Battle of Kurikara under the skillful direction of Minamoto no Yoritomo. Among other interesting features of this battle was the use of a herd of oxen against the Taira forces. The herd was driven in a stampede through the Taira ranks, forcing them to break formation, killing or injuring soldiers, and causing mahem.

The war began in and around Kyoto, the capital of Japan at the time. The samurai would have used the *tachi*, a sword that was worn cutting edge down. This was predecessor to the more famous *katana*, which was worn cutting edge up and had a shorter blade than the tachi. Other weapons in use at the time were the *naginata* (a curved blade on the end of a wooden shaft) and, for those fighting on horseback, specially crafted bamboo bows.

It was the Genpei War that solidified the power of the samurai class. The emperor became relegated to a symbolic role, and the Shogun assumed the real political and military power. After the war, the Kamakura Shogunate was firmly established.



# MONGOL INVASIONS

Apparently, the sheer force of his personality attracted followers to the young Genghis Khan. Even as a young man, he set about unifying the fractured and fractious Mongol tribes, deliberately destroying the old clan structures to create a single nation. His success was formalized in 1206, when a meeting of the clans at the Onon River elected Temüjin (his birth name) “Genghis Khan,” meaning “universal or righteous king.”



*Genghis Khan (c.1162–1227) was proclaimed ruler of the Mongols in 1206 at a meeting at the Onan River.*

## The Divine Wind

In 1274, Kublai Khan launched his first attack against Japan. With 30,000 to 40,000 troops (mostly Chinese and Korean, with Mongolian officers), the Mongols overran the islands of Tsushima and Iki, encountering stiff defense from the samurai, whose horse archery matched the Mongols’ and who bore the famously lethal samurai sword. The fleet then anchored in Hakata Bay, and the invasion ended with a deadly typhoon, which smashed ships and killed 13,000 invaders.

Kublai Khan returned in 1281, with one of the largest naval invasion forces ever seen until modern times. The smaller of the two fleets left Masan and again overran Tsushima and Iki. Despite their superior numbers and exploding bombs (filled with gunpowder and iron shards), the samurai held them to their ships and conducted daring nighttime naval raids. The smaller fleet waited for its companion, which finally arrived at Takashima. The samurai launched an incredible attack there, to no avail. Japan seemed doomed—but once again, a major typhoon swept in. The fleet was devastated. The invasion force suffered a casualty rate as high as ninety percent. The Japanese remember the typhoons as *kamikaze*, “divine wind.” Japan would not again have to seriously face the prospect of foreign invasion until 1945.

*Below: After resisting the first Mongol invasion in 1274, the samurai prepared for the next invasion by building forts and other defensive structures at potential landing points, including Hakata Bay, where a 7-ft-high wall was constructed in 1276.*



*Above: Mongol Empire in 1227 at Genghis Khan’s death. Already covering a vast area of China and Central Asia, it would grow to become the largest contiguous empire in history.*



Tangut-held Xia, in 1209. In 1211, he turned against the Jin, despite the disparity in military strength (175,000 Mongols to 600,000 Jin). After the Mongols seized Xuande fu and Fouzhou, Jin commanders began to defect: it took several bloody years, but the Jin capital (Beijing) fell in 1215.

Leaving one of his generals in China, Genghis himself now traveled west to Khwarezm, a large Muslim kingdom that had made the mistake of killing Mongolian merchants, believing them to be spies. By now, Genghis’s army had swelled, and he brought perhaps 200,000 troops with him, half of the force Khwarezm’s shah commanded. As with the Jin, the disparity could not save Khwarezm. The Mongols had learned the use of siege engines from the Jin. Genghis was ruthless in avenging the insult to his merchants, slaughtering hundreds of thousands, and rampaging through the entire country from 1218 until 1223. He was back in the Mongol capital, Karakorum, in 1225, but he returned the next year to Xia, which fell in 1227, the year of Genghis’s death.

## FOUR SONS, FOUR KHANATES

Genghis’s empire was divided among his four sons, one of whom had prominence over the others. These sons established four khanates, the Ilkhanate in the Middle East, the Chaghatai Khanate in Central Asia, the Kipchak Khanate (Golden Horde), which ravaged Europe, and the Yuan Dynasty of China. This last unified China in 1279, and under the famous Kublai Khan—the Great Khan, first among the khans—invaded Korea six times, finally subduing the peninsula in 1258, and Japan twice, although the island remained unconquered.

*Left: The kamikazi, or divine wind, that devastated the fleet of Kublai Khan in 1281.*





# SENGOKU PERIOD

The Sengoku or Warring States Period of Japan is perhaps the most famous in the nation's history. Many of the great tales of Samurai, as well as many famous Japanese writings on military strategy, came out of this period. The Warring States Period was a time of constant warfare in which the Daimyo of Japan fought against each other in incessant struggles for power. The period began in 1467 with a conflict over succession. What started as a small family matter quickly escalated into a national crisis involving the most prominent officials and generals in Japan.

## ONIN WAR 1467–77

The shogun at the time was Ashikaga Yoshimasa, who had no heir. In 1465, he persuaded his brother, Ashikaga Yoshimi, to abandon his monastic life and support him as shogun, thereby making him his heir. A year later, however, Yoshimasa's wife gave birth to a son, causing political division. War broke out over who should become the next shogun. The ensuing struggle was known as the Onin War. Hosokawa Katsumoto supported Yoshimi and his rival, Yamana Mochitoyo, supported Yoshimasa's son.

## KYOTO IN RUINS

The war raged on for a full decade. At the end, Japan's capital, Kyoto, lay in ruins. Oddly enough, Shogun Ashikaga remained uninvolved in the battles. For more than a century after this war, a fragmented Japan struggled on in constant tension between Daimyo and their samurai retainers. It was not until Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu that Japan would finally unite in the late sixteenth century.

Below: Miyamoto Musashi (1584–1645) is renowned as one of the greatest warriors of all time and was the founder of the Niten-ryu style of swordsmanship. He mastered a two-sword style as opposed to the more traditional method of wielding the a single two-handed sword.



*Hosokawa Katsumoto (1430–1473) was one of the Kanrei, the Deputies to the Shogun, during Japan's Muromachi Period. He is famous for his involvement Onin War, which sparked the 130-year Sengoku Period.*



*Above: Musashi slaying a dragon. Even in Musashi's own lifetime there were fictional texts describing fantastical battles and superhuman feats. It is therefore quite difficult to separate fact from fiction when discussing his life.*

*Left: Himeji Castle originated in 1333, when a fort was constructed on Himeyama hill, but the castle as it is today was built from 1601 to 1609. It is the largest castle in Japan and one of the first UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the country.*



# SENGOKU PERIOD



### Forging Greatness

The Sengoku Period was the age of the *katana*. While *katana* could be made cheaply and poorly, the prized blades were made from several layers of steel masterfully forged to produce an edge of razor sharpness and strength, with a soft core capable of withstanding the impact of clashes. The beautiful temper lines that adorned the edges of these artistic instruments of destruction were achieved by applying a thin layer of clay slip to the blade during the forging process. This allowed swordsmiths to control the temperature of the steel in different parts of the blade and only temper the edge itself to the right hardness.

Above: *Modern-day reenactment of a samurai warrior*



Above: *Stories of the Samurai's epic battles with the Mongols and among themselves have been told and retold by writers and poets.*

### WARS OF UNIFICATION

Born the son of a samurai in 1534, Oda Nobunaga secured control of Owari as its primary *daimyo* in 1560, when he defeated the much larger force of Imagawa Yoshimoto, governor of Suruga. Yoshimoto's death in battle led to the release of his hostages, among them Tokugawa Iyasu (Matsudaira Motoyasu). Tokugawa Iyasu took control of Mikawa Province and allied with Nobunaga, whose wars of unification had already begun.

First to fall were the Saito of Mino in 1567. The following year, Nobunaga marched into Kyoto, home of the imperial court, and handed the shogunate to Ashikaga Yoshiaki. In 1570, he began a decade-long war against Japan's warrior monks, whose political and military power threatened his own. His early victory at Enryakuji spelled their downfall. Meanwhile, Nobunaga turned on Yoshiaki, whom he expelled from Kyoto in 1573. At the time of his death in 1582, he controlled half of Japan.

### MASTERS OF THE SWORD

Out of this period of intense conflict came several great masters of the sword. Among the most famous was Miyamoto Musashi, who would write *A Book of Five Rings*, which has become popular across the world today because of its valuable insights into strategies that apply to many areas of life, not just swordsmanship. Musashi fought dozens of duels from his early teens through to his famous duel with Sasaki Kojiro, and was never defeated.

Above: *Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1435–1490) was the eighth shogun of the Ashikaga shogunate, reigning from 1449 to 1473.*



Left: *Map of Japan showing the areas controlled by the various clans in the sixteenth century.*

Below and below left: *These images show a range of weapons and armory used by the samurai, including the famed katana sword and the distinctive asymmetrical bow and long arrows employed by samurai horsemen.*





# BATTLE OF NAGASHINO

In spring 1575, the youthful *daimyo* of the Takeda clan, Katsuyori, invaded Mikawa and Totomi, provinces located southeast of his own border provinces, Shinano and Suruga. The *daimyo* of Mikawa and Totomi, Tokugawa Ieyasu, repulsed Takeda attacks at Okazaki and Yoshida, leaving only five hundred soldiers to defend Nagashino, a castle in the southwest corner of Mikawa. By June 17, when Katsuyori surrounded Nagashino with fifteen thousand men, he was desperate for a victory. His father, Takeda Shingen, was a legendarily successful military man, and the Takeda generals were rapidly losing faith in Katsuyori.



## A NEW KIND OF WEAPON

Helped by the highly defensible location of the castle, the little garrison at Nagashino managed to stave off Takeda assaults, allowing Ieyasu time to send his ally, Oda Nobunaga, to the rescue. Nobunaga commanded 30,000 of his own men and 8,000 of Ieyasu's. Of these 38,000, 3,500 were arquebusiers, men wielding the earliest form of guns to arrive in Japan. Nobunaga had learned about arquebuses the hard way at the hands of his enemies, the Ikko Ikki monks. Ever adaptable, however, he quickly acquired the weapon for himself.

## ON THE PLAIN OF SHIDARAHARA

Nobunaga's famous victory at Nagashino is as much a triumph of his brilliant logistics as a testament to the new technology. He arranged his troops carefully, familiar with Katsuyori's impetuous temperament and remembering Takeda's traditional strength: mounted samurai charges. Nobunaga erected wooden palisades at Shidarahara, correctly calculating that Katsuyori would charge—probably the correct decision in normal circumstances.

## NOBUNAGA'S FINEST HOUR

Luck played a role; rainy weather softened the ground, slowing the horses, and Katsuyori assumed it would prevent the gunpowder from catching. But the arquebusiers, positioned in three ranks behind the palisade—giving each man ample reloading time—kept their powder dry. The cavalry charge became a slaughter. Starting at six o'clock in the morning on June 28, samurai tried repeatedly to break Nobunaga's line, only to crumble in the face of his devastating gunfire. In the afternoon, with the cavalry depleted and exhausted, Nobunaga abandoned the palisade and attacked, scattering the Takeda. Meanwhile, a unit of three thousand men skirted the main battle and lifted the siege on Nagashino proper, ensuring complete victory. This was Nobunaga's finest hour and Japan's first modern battle. Gun units had replaced the traditional samurai on the front lines.

Above right: *This painting depicts a general of the Takeda clan launching his troops against the highly fortified castle of Nagashino.*

Right: *The arrival of firearms in Japan in the sixteenth century launched an era famed for the construction of majestic fortresses in defensible or strategically critical locations.*



*Oda Nobunaga lived a life of continuous military conquest, ultimately conquering a third of Japan before his death in 1582.*

## Fortifications in the Sengoku Period

At the outset of the Onin War, fortifications consisted of reinforced houses or small wooden forts. They increased dramatically in size and number as the civil war dragged on. The *daimyo* constructed fort after fort in the most defensible or vulnerable locations. After 1543, when Portuguese traders sold the first guns in Japan, castles became massive stone edifices, often with multiple moats, double- or triple-thick walls, and high central keeps. The first of these, Azuchi, built by Oda Nobunaga in the 1570s, is regarded as so seminal to Japanese history that historians refer to the years between 1568 and 1582 as the "Azuchi Period." Another characteristic of this period was the deliberately ostentatious interior of castles, flaunting the owner's power. In addition to their practical uses, castles had become status symbols.





# THE TEN CAMPAIGNS OF QIANLONG

In the early seventeenth century, Jurchen leader Nurhachi, and his son, Huang Taiji, established the Manchu-led Qing Dynasty, taking control of China from the Ming and greatly expanding the empire. Qianlong, sixth emperor of the Manchurian Qing Dynasty was the fourth Qing emperor to rule over China, and he continued extending its borders. Qianlong achieved remarkable success, particularly in subduing the steppe peoples of Central Asia, who had, for millennia, threatened the northern regions. During a span of about forty years, he waged what is known as the Ten Campaigns, beginning in 1755 and not concluding until 1792.

*Map showing the topography, cities, villages, and roads with the military posts in the Xinjiang, including the administrative system and local divisions under the rule of the Emperor Qianlong.*

## THE OLD MAN OF TEN COMPLETE MILITARY VICTORIES

The emperor dubbed himself “The Old Man of Ten Complete Military Victories.” Although the Qing grew to be three times the size of the previous Ming, this naming was more than a bit self-congratulatory propaganda, for despite his many successes, several of his “complete military victories” were anything but complete. Qianlong’s wars bankrupted the nation, and his policies failed to unite his people.

## CELEBRATING SUCCESS?

In the first of the Ten Great Campaigns, Qianlong’s forces took on the tribal Jinchuan people of Tibet. At first, the Jinchuan repulsed the emperor’s forces, walling themselves up in their hill forts and forcing the Qing to expend significant resources in hunting them down, blasting them out, or starving them into submission. Eventually, the Jinchuan sued for peace after a large army had settled in. Qianlong led other campaigns in the Sichuan against the Jinchuan people of the hills, in the south against Burma, then Vietnam, and finally against the Gurkhas of Nepal.

## QIANLONG VICTORIOUS

The defeat of the Dzungars, a western branch of Mongols, was perhaps the most significant territorial gain. It added the territory we know today as Xinjiang. This is the home of the Uyghur Turks and other Turkic peoples. Qianlong took advantage of the perceived threat to Tibet and a Dzungar civil war, and invaded in 1755. The Dzungars were all but wiped out by large-scale massacres, battlefield deaths, and a concurrent smallpox epidemic (a disease to which they had no resistance).



Above: *Qianlong’s decisive victory at the Black River, during the second campaign against the Dzungars in 1759.*

Right: *The Emperor Qianlong in ceremonial battle dress. As a youth he excelled in martial arts and literary pursuits.*



THE TEN CAMPAIGNS OF QIANLONG		
Year	Campaign	Result
1747–49	First Jinchuan War	Stalemate
1755	Invasion of Dzungar empire	Victory
1756–57	Conquering the Dzungars	Victory
1755–59	Campaign against the Uighurs	Victory
1765–69	Invasion of Burma (Konbaung dynasty)	Loss
1771–76	Second Jinchuan War	Victory
1787–88	Repression of Taiwan rebellion	Victory
1788–89	Invasion of Vietnam	Loss
1788	Defense of Tibet against the Gurkhas	Stalemate
1791–93	Campaign against Gurkhas of Nepal	Victory

A REAL VICTORY

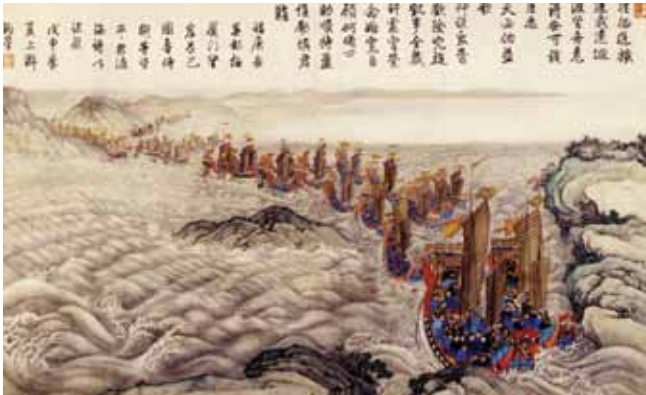
A campaign against the Uighurs from 1758 to 1789 added Altishahr and the Turfan Basin to the new territory of Xinjiang. In 1770, a chieftain of the Jinchuan began organizing his people, a move Qianlong viewed as a threat. As before, an army was sent in and, as before, the war threatened to become a lasting Jinchuan loss to attrition. This time, however, Qianlong refused to negotiate and he met with victory in 1776, when his forces captured and killed the Jinchuan chieftain. A rebellion in Taiwan was successfully crushed in 1788.

THE LAST OF THE CAMPAIGNS

The final campaigns were against the Gurkhas, who attacked southern Tibet twice in the early 1790s. The first time, they withdrew to Nepal before the arrival of Qing forces. A couple of years later, they returned in what seemed to be much more serious force. A Qing army was dispatched and pushed the Gurkhas back across the mountains to Nepal. This essentially concluded Qianlong’s great campaigns. He was able during his reign to expand the territory of his dominion significantly through sheer military might. The length of his reign—more than sixty years—added much needed continuity in the face of such great efforts, but nonetheless the wars were extremely costly, in both money spent and lives lost.



Right: *Painting depicting the triumphant return of the Qing fleet from Taiwan following the suppression of the Taiwan rebellion (1787–1788).*



Top: Born Hong-li (1711–1799), the Emperor Qianlong was the sixth emperor of the Manchu-led Qing Dynasty, and the fourth emperor to rule over China proper. He reigned officially from 1735 until 1796 when abdicated in favor of his son to avoid reigning longer than his revered grandfather. Despite his abdication, however, he retained ultimate power until his death in 1799.

Above: “Conquest of Lamu and Rizhi,” a scene from the second campaign against the Jinchuan hill people (1771–1776).

Left: *Battle scene from the victorious second campaign against the Jinchan. The Emperor’s forces are shown breaching the enemy’s defenses and several fortresses are aflame.*



# OPIUM WARS

In 1839, the proud Qing Empire—weakened by years of populist uprisings, widespread poverty, hunger, and financial hardship—came to blows with Great Britain, one of the nineteenth century's most powerful empires. At issue was opium. The roughly twelve million Chinese addicts had created massive economic, safety, and health problems. Britain had not introduced the drug to China, but she controlled large Indian poppy fields, resulting in imports of some 5.1 million pounds annually. Fed up with the drug trade, a Chinese official confiscated and burned 3.4 million pounds of opium, and blockaded the homes of foreign merchants.



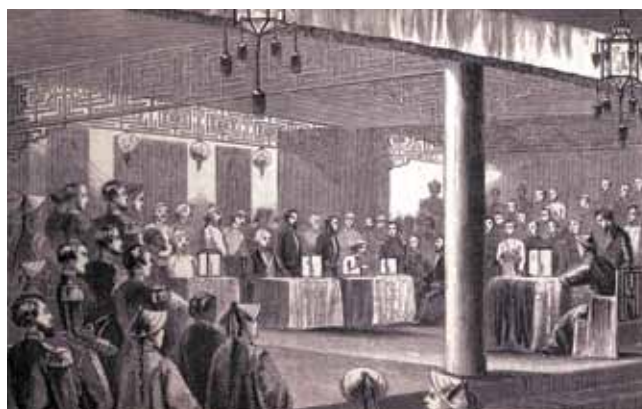
*Charles Cousin-Montauban leading French cavalry forces in the Second Opium War, in 1860.*

## MILLIONS KILLED

The British sailed into China with impunity, using early steam-powered gunships, whose shallow draft allowed them to operate effectively in coastal and river waters. Blockades at Canton, Ningpo, and the mouth of the Yangtze were followed by the seizure of coastal cities, including Canton and Shanghai, and incursions at Tientsin and Nanking. On land, the British ravaged southern China, killing millions until China was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking on August 29, 1842. One of history's most humiliating peace treaties, it required China to hand over several port cities, including the island of Hong Kong, and pay Great Britain approximately half its annual revenue.

## A LOPSIDED AFFAIR

The Second Opium War broke out in 1856, a grimly lopsided affair that pitted Britain and France against the beleaguered China, then suffering through the deadly Taiping Rebellion (1850–64). The European powers wanted to force China to legalize opium in order to expand their trading rights. They seized on slight provocations—the boarding of an English vessel, the death of a French priest—to make war. The invaders



*Above: Signing the Treaty of Tientsin, June 1858.*

took Guangzhou (1856) and Tianjin (1858), whereupon they attempted to force China to sign the Treaties of Tianjin. When China rejected the grossly unfavorable terms, the invasion resumed. Some 25,000 soldiers stormed Dagu Fortress, Tianjin, and Beijing. Casualty counts are hard to come by, but estimates put the ratio of Chinese to European casualties at forty to one. The senseless looting and destruction of the fabulous Summer Palace (a complex of some 200 buildings on eighty square miles of park and a masterpiece of Chinese art, architecture, and landscape design) in retribution for the deaths of several Europeans was nearly as terrible. After Beijing, China had no choice but to accede to the terms of the Treaty of Tianjin.

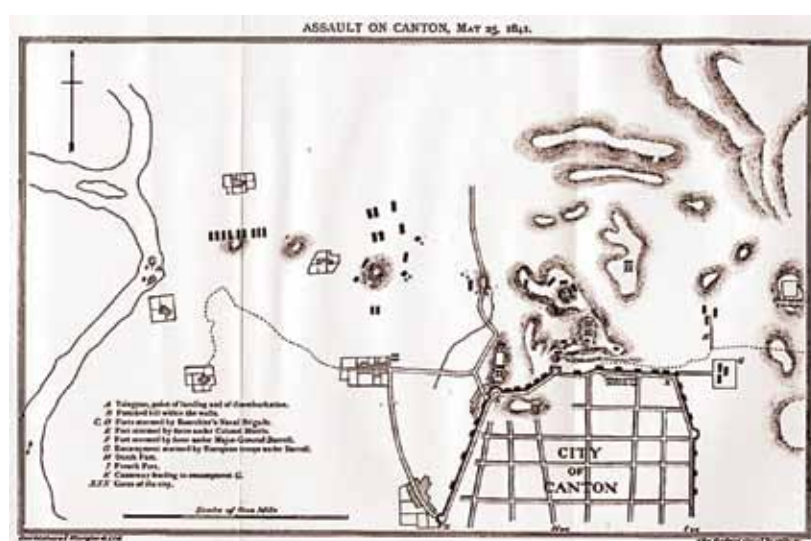
*Left: The Anglo-French army invading Beijing through the Tchao-yant gate. Eleventh-hour peace negotiations broke down when the Chinese arrested and tortured the British envoy Harry Parkes and a team of diplomats.*



## The Taiping Rebellion

Of greater importance than the Opium Wars to the long-term instability of the Qing Dynasty was the Taiping Rebellion, a massive uprising from 1850 to 1864 that mobilized more than one million armed, fanatical peasants against nine million Chinese soldiers and resulted in some twenty million deaths, ranking second only to World War II in casualties. The leader of the rebellion, Hong Xiuquan (1814–64), believed himself to be Jesus Christ's brother, and his proto-communist ideas, combined with his moral rigidity and an appeal to archaic Chinese ideals, attracted a large following among China's peasants, disenchanted with Manchurian (Qing) rule and beset by chronic starvation. Hong organized his army into squads of 13,000 and, from his starting point in Kwangsi, managed to take cities on Yangtze River as far north as Nanjing, which—under the name Tianjing—became the Taiping capital. In desperation, the Qing authorized provincial armies under local leaders, who eventually managed to repress the rebellion, but the uprising and the local armies had fatally weakened the dynasty.

*Below: Map of the Assault on Canton in May, 1841. Canton was one of the only ports in China opened to foreign countries for trade.*





# BOXER UPRISING

Two unprecedented alliances formed during the Boxer Rebellion of 1899 to 1900. On one side, was an astonishing coalition of the world's great powers—several of them recent antagonists—including Japan, Russia, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States. On the other side, the secret society of I-ho-ch'uan ("righteous and harmonious fists," or "the Boxers"), allied with its oldest enemy, the Qing rulers. The Boxers considered the Manchurian Qing Dynasty foreign and, therefore, intolerable, but as European, Russian, Japanese, and American influence and power continued to grow, their enmity toward the Manchurian "foreigners" faded.

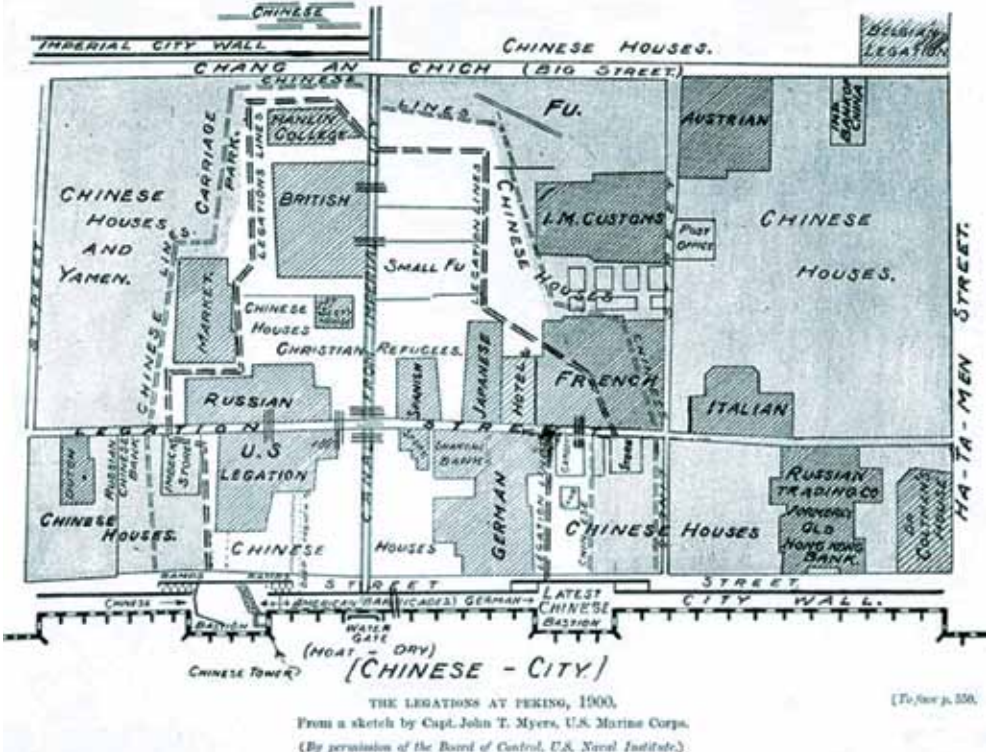
## WESTERN ENCROACHMENT

By 1899, China had been forced to cede numerous cities to the various allied powers. They had watched in alarm as Western technology—in particular, a railroad that ran between Tientsin and Peking (Beijing)—threatened traditional livelihoods. There was also a growing resentment of Western cultural encroachments, in particular, of Christianity. In late 1899 a violent uprising began that targeted Christians, including Chinese as well as foreign missionaries. By May of the following year, groups of armed Boxers had precipitated riots and massacres. On June 6, 1900, the Boxers disabled the railroad tracks between Tientsin and Peking. The Japanese chancellor was murdered in Peking on June 11 in the Legation Quarter, where several hundred foreign marines had gathered.

## THE BOXER PROTOCOL

On June 17, the united foreign powers captured the Dagu (Taku) forts in an attempt to open a route from Tianjin, where heavy fighting raged into July. The empress commanded that all foreigners be killed on June 18. Two days later, the siege of the Legation Quarter and the cathedral began in earnest. Yet, once the army of the united foreign powers began marching, some eighteen thousand strong, the rebellion collapsed. Tianjin fell to the allies on July 14, Pitsang on August 5, and Yangtsun on August 6. Finally, on August 14, the allies captured Peking, relieving the besieged marines. The conflict officially ended in 1901 with the Boxer Protocol, whose terms humiliated China, forcing it to accept foreign fortifications, the demolition of Chinese fortifications, and make annual reparation payments until 1940 (these stopped after World War I). Nevertheless, even if the Boxers had thrown their last punch, China would not be content with the protocol for long. Other nationalist forces would soon rise.

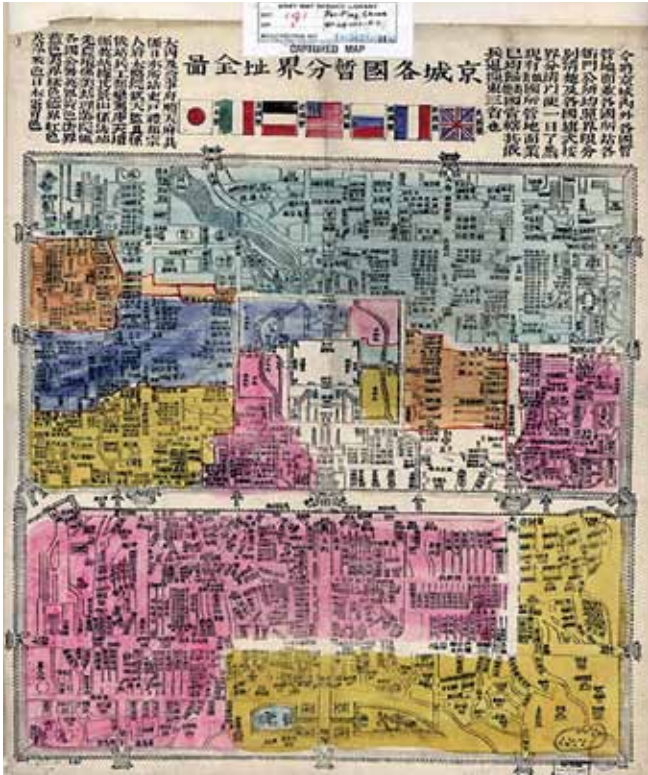
*A Chinese "Boxer." The term refers to members of the Society of Righteous and Harmonious Fists—a secret society teaching martial arts, founded in the northern coastal province of Shandong. Its membership consisted largely of people who had lost their livelihoods due to imperialism.*



Above right: Map of the defenses of the Legation Quarter during the Boxer Rebellion. The Legation Quarter was the area in Peking where a number of foreign diplomatic offices were located between 1861 and 1959.

Far right: The allied occupation of Peking after the Boxer rebellion in 1900. British-occupied area in yellow; French in blue; U.S. in green and ivory; German in red; and Japanese in light green.

Right: Satirical cartoon illustrating the Allied forces dividing Chinese wealth.





# TAIPING REBELLION

Having failed the civil service exam four times, a young man named Hong found himself subject to visions, which, after encounters with Protestant missionaries, he interpreted in a Christian framework. In 1847, believing himself to be the son of God, he established a commune in Kwangtung Province, where he preached a peculiar blend of Christianity, social revolution, and reinterpreted Confucianism. The movement spread rapidly among the disaffected and impoverished populace of Kwangtung. By 1850 Hong—now calling himself the Tianwang, “Heavenly King”—declared himself sovereign of the “Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace” (Taiping Tianguo). On January 11, 1851, Hong sounded the call for revolution.



## THE GREAT PEACE

While Hong’s vision of his empire was heavenly and peaceful, the truth is it bore little resemblance to that description. On November 4, 1850, he battled with imperial troops for the first time. In 1851 the Taipings began marching through the provinces of Kwangsi and Hunan. In 1852 they besieged Changsha, the Hunan provincial capital. Although they lost several leaders and didn’t win any notable battles or cities, they continued to expand with their message of spiritual salvation and overthrow of foreign rulers.

## A DEADLY FORCE

By 1853 the convert-recruits had become a deadly force as the Taipings began triumphing in earnest. That year the rebels secured the Yangtze River, taking the port of Kiukiang and the strategically crucial city of Anking. Then they won their most significant city, Nanking (Nanjing), which they promptly declared their “Heavenly Capital” (Tianjing).

## DISUNION AND COLLAPSE

From Nanking, the Taiping rebels swept out in two directions. The northern army, though initially successful, failed to take Peking (Beijing). The western army captured Hwaining (of Anhwei Province) and Changsha, the Hunan capital. However, Hunan refused to fold, and the provincial governor, Zeng Guofan, forged a determined army of his own, eventually drawing reinforcements from the gentry of other provinces, who had become alarmed at the proto-Communism of the Taipings. Zeng scored a major victory in July 1854, seizing control of the central Yangtze.

## AN INSIDE JOB

Over the next two years, the Taipings traded victories and defeats with imperial forces, but made little headway. By 1856 vicious infighting had begun, with one of Hong’s foremost administrators, Yang Xiuqing, even claiming to have visions of his own. On September 2, 1856, he was killed, and his household and devotees massacred. Afterward, Yang’s killer was himself assassinated, apparently on Hong’s orders.

## WORLD’S BLOODIEST CIVIL WAR

Division and distrust at the highest levels of leadership progressively hamstrung the Taiping Rebellion. Armies operated independently of each other. In 1860, Westerners joined the fray against the Taipings. On July 19, 1864, Nanking fell to a siege. Despite the slaughter of thousands of Taipings in the city, it took another two years for the last Taiping resistance to crumble, and decades for some regions to recover. Although ultimately a failure, the Taiping Rebellion had permanently crippled the Qing Dynasty and ranks as the world’s bloodiest civil war. With a death toll of twenty million or more, it was outstripped only by World War II.

*Hong Xiuquan (1814–1864), born Hong Renkun, led the Taiping Rebellion, proclaiming himself the “Heavenly King” and brother of Christ.*

*Below: Imperial forces sweeping the rebels out the Xun River. By early 1864 imperial control in most areas was reestablished.*



Right: “*The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom*”—the map shows the territories controlled by the Taiping in 1854.



# RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

In 1859 Russia established a naval base at Vladivostok—the name means “Rule the East,” just as Vladikavkaz, on the other side of this massive country, means “Rule the Caucasus.” Russia’s aggression put it on a collision course with Japan, which had experienced two hundred years of peace, but had now embarked on a program of modernization, ending the Tokugawa shogunate in 1868, adopting Western technology, and rebuilding its army and navy. At the same time, the Japanese were eyeing Manchuria (which Russia had coveted since the Boxer Rebellion) and Korea. Thus, Japan and Russia both sought to “Rule the East.”

## A LONG AND FRUITLESS JOURNEY

It was inevitable that Russia and Japan would go to war. Japan struck first. On February 8 and 9, 1904 the Japanese launched a surprise attack on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, crippling Russia’s naval capacity in the Yellow Sea. This assault was followed by onslaughts on Vladivostok and Inchon, with an army landing behind. The Japanese seized Seoul and headed north. By April 25, the Battle of Yalu had begun. While Russia did indeed field the world’s foremost army, the bulk of its enormous strength lay in the west. Quite simply, it took time to transport an army across Russia on the new Trans-Siberian highway and, at the start of the war, Russia’s eastern forces numbered only 100,000 in comparison to Japan’s 250,000.

## JAPANESE INDOMITABILITY

Russia lost the Battle of Yalu, but other Japanese armies landed and besieged Port Arthur, which hung on until January. The Japanese were relentless, however, despite sustaining massive casualties, and emerged victorious at the Battle of Liaoyang and the Battle of Sha-Ho. Casualties on both sides mounted into the tens of thousands, but reinforcements arrived in February. By the time the Battle of Mukden began, on February 19, 1905, each country’s troop strength stood at about 310,000. Repeated attempts to outflank the Russians failed, but the sheer indomitability of the Japanese forced the Russians to fall back until, finally, on March 7, Russian General Alexei Kuropatkin ordered a full retreat. Russia’s only hope now lay with its Baltic fleet, which had left European waters months before to make the 20,000-mile journey to the east. The Battle of Tsushima began on May 27 and lasted until May 28. The long journey was for naught; the Russians were thoroughly trounced.

Below: Map of Japan and Greater Manchuria at the turn of the twentieth century. Russian (outer) Manchuria is the lighter red region to the upper right. Following its victory in 1905, Japan embarked on a campaign to dominate China and the rest of Asia.



Map showing the battlefields in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). It is described as “the first great war of the 20th century.”



Above: A scene from the Battle of Mukden, February 1905, illustrating the relentless onslaught of the Japanese forces.



## Casualty Counts and Lessons Learned

Russia and Japan signed the Peace Treaty of Portsmouth on September 5, 1905, at a conference led by American president Theodore Roosevelt. Casualties amounted to about 70,000 for the Japanese, compared with 100,000 for the Russians, but there were only 1,626 Japanese prisoners of war to the Russians’ 71,802. The discrepancy resulted from a tenet of Japanese martial culture, which viewed capture as a fate worse than death: suicide was considered to be far more honorable, à la bushido. In terms of technology and tactics, the war largely presaged World War I, but the more immediate military-political effect was to shock the Western world into seriously reevaluating Japan. Racial prejudice had blinded Europe, Russia, and America to Japanese capabilities; they would not, in the future, discount the non-Caucasian nations.

Below: Russian cruiser severely damaged in the Battle of Tsushima in May 1905, in which the Russian Baltic fleet was routed.





# SINO-JAPANESE WARS

In the nineteenth and twentieth century, Japan launched large-scale attacks on its Chinese neighbor. The first war began over control of Korea, which had operated in the difficult position between these two great powers for centuries. The days of its strength under the Silla Kingdom had faded into memory and Korea paid tribute to the Qing Dynasty. However, the Qing had grown weak. Korea was an important vassal state, and Japan's efforts in 1894 to take control of the peninsula revealed this weakness and also bolstered Japan's position on the world stage, demonstrating its strength and capability as a dominant power.

## ATTEMPTED COUP

In 1875 Japan forced Korea to become independent in its foreign relations in order to open up trade and take advantage of Korea's wealth of natural resources. Prior to this, Korea had operated under the control of China. Over the next twenty years, different groups within Korea sought to ally themselves either with Japan or China. In 1884 a rebellion broke out in an attempt to overthrow the Korean government and replace it with one that was more favorable to relations with Japan. Although the rebellion was quashed and war avoided, only ten years later the leader of the rebellion was assassinated in Shanghai and his mutilated body displayed in Korea as a warning. The outrage over this incident spurred uprisings in Korea. The Chinese sent military aid to put down the rebellions, which—without informing the Japanese—violated the Convention of Tientsin, the peace treaty that had avoided war in 1884.

## A NAVY MODELED ON THE BRITISH

Itō Sukeyuki commanded the fleet of Japanese ships. The Japanese Imperial Navy was modeled on the British navy, with most of its boats built either by the British or French. Consisting of small, swift craft, the Japanese navy was technologically advanced for its day, and Japan had sent officers abroad to learn from the British. The technological, as well as the organizational advantages advantage of the Japanese fleet and land troops had a tremendous

impact. Despite the size of China and its forces, the Japanese swiftly took control of Seoul, sinking a Chinese warship. They then quickly moved inland and advanced on Beijing. The Chinese sued for peace, and this first war was ended with the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which, among other things, granted control of Taiwan to Japan.

## THE SECOND WAR

War broke out again in 1937, when imperialist Japan sought to take control of China, its lands, and vast resources. Operating with a swiftness reminiscent of the first war, Japan achieved many early victories that gave it control of Shanghai and huge territories along the eastern coast of China. But the two nations then ended up deadlocked in a horrible conflict that cost hundreds of thousands of lives. The war only ended in 1945 with the defeat of Japan in the wake of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



It is estimated that over 900 died in the sinking of the Kow Shing, a British merchant vessel chartered by the Qing government.

Below: The Battle of the Yalu River was the largest naval battle of the First Sino-Japanese War, and it was won by the Japanese.

Below: The first Chinese-Japanese war (1894-1895), showing both Chinese and Japanese movements.

Below right: Japanese occupation of China (in pink), circa 1940.





# SIBERIAN INTERVENTION

The complex political and military environment that emerged in the wake of World War I was particularly complicated for Japan, which greatly feared communism and wanted as much distance between itself and its Russian neighbor as possible. Japan had already annexed Korea in 1910, but was hoping to create a separate state in Siberia on the east coast of the Russian Empire in order to establish a protective distance from Russia. An international sanction with the purported aim of peace keeping provided the perfect opportunity for Japan to send several thousand men to Siberia.



## SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY

U.S. president Woodrow Wilson sent the American Expeditionary Force Siberia to Vladivostok to protect allied troops, American assets, and the Trans-Siberian Railway in Siberia. The troops were sent at the request of British and French officials when they were short of men in Siberia to help the Czech Legion make its way safely out of Siberia and to Vladivostok. President Wilson asked Japan to contribute to this force. They were initially asked to provide 7,000 troops to bolster the allied forces, but eventually sent ten times that figure, and additional civilians to settle in portions of eastern Siberia.

## AN INTERVENTION WITH FEW RESULTS

Although there were no actual results to speak of, the Siberian Intervention affected Japan detrimentally. The Japanese operated under multiple layers of reasoning when joining the coalition; however, their subtler motivations were not well defined enough to be executed with any degree of effectiveness. Prime Minister Terauchi Masatake proposed the intervention. Terauchi had had an illustrious military career, even losing his right hand during the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877. Terauchi had been made general in Korea during the annexation and had brought the country under the military control of Japan. Staunchly devoted to expanding Japan's control in Korea and China, he promoted the establishment of schools across Korea teaching Japanese curriculum. He also worked to negotiate, both openly and secretly, for greater Japanese control in China. Terauchi died in 1919, but the Siberian Intervention was already underway.

## DISORGANIZATION AND DEVASTATION

The whole situation served to fragment Japan's military and cause internal bitterness and strife. Japan suffered about 5,000 losses. Many of the deaths were from illness and cold, as well as poor preparation for the weather conditions in Siberia. The Japanese were unsuccessful in creating a separate Siberian state,



and the Red Army won the Russian Civil War and established the communist state of the Soviet Union. All in all, it proved to be a disaster for Japan, but the threat from a communist power just across the sea did not ultimately materialize in any way that would jeopardize Japanese sovereignty. The efforts of the other countries involved were not wholly successful either, but their involvement was limited compared to that of Japan. No one was properly prepared for the terrain and the cold encountered in Siberia. The Siberian Intervention set the stage, however, for little more than a decade later when Japan would once again invade China in the second Sino-Japanese war.

Top: *At the request of Britain and France, Woodrow Wilson sent U.S. troops against the advice of the U.S. War Department.*

Above: *A Japanese propaganda lithograph rallies for occupation of Siberia.*

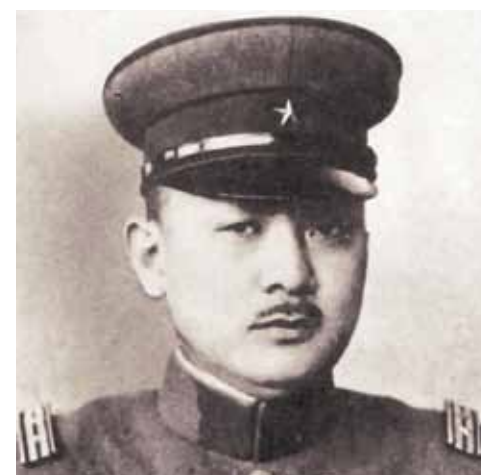


Left: *American troops in front of a building occupied by Czech and Slovak staff in Vladivostok, 1918. One of their major objectives was to rescue the 40,000 men of the Czechoslovak Legions who were being held by Bolshevik forces.*



# WORLD WAR II: BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

By February 1945, American navy and marine units were closing in on Japan, having wrested away most of Japan's early territorial gains. America's top-ranking commanders, seriously considering an invasion of Japan proper, needed to secure defensible positions for bomb attacks that were close enough to Japan to allow planes to refuel or receive repairs and with large, open fields for airstrips. The two obvious choices were Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Plans were made and ships set sail. The closing days of World War II and the bloodiest battle in the whole of the Pacific war lay ahead.



*Kuribayashi was known for sharing hardships with his men and is thought to have died in battle.*

## DEFENDING THE ISLAND FROM THE INTERIOR

Lieutenant General Tadamichi Kuribayashi, commanding some 22,000 troops, defended Iwo Jima—an eight-mile-long, volcanic island about 575 miles southeast of Japan. Kuribayashi knew he would be overrun, but, determined to hold the island to the last, he built strong defenses in the island's mountainous interior, including miles of underground caves, concrete bunkers, and tunnels, instead of defending the beaches as the Japanese had done elsewhere. The American marines, who had asked for ten days of naval bombardment prior to landing, received only three. As a result, most of Kuribayashi's defenses remained when the first marines landed on Iwo Jima at nine a.m. on February 19, 1945.

## UNCOMMON VALOR

Fighting on Iwo Jima raged for thirty-six days, resulting in one of the toughest, bloodiest marine engagements in the entire Pacific war. Naval guns could not penetrate the underground defenses. The stout Japanese fortifications required frontal assault. Inch by terrible inch, U.S. Marines crept forward in an exhausting war of attrition. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, in charge of operations in the central Pacific, famously commented that "Among the Americans who served on Iwo Island, uncommon valor was a common virtue." More than a quarter of World War II Medals of Honor were bestowed on marines who fought in the Iwo invasion. The Japanese, too, displayed uncommon valor, dying nearly to a man in the hopeless defense of the island: only 216 surrendered. (Most of the 1,083 survivors surrendered after the Americans declared the island secure on March 26.) American casualties numbered about a third of the invasion force.



*Above: Iwo Jima is located approximately 750 miles south of Tokyo.*



*Above: The American plan concentrated on the beaches, while the Japanese plan concentrated on the interior.*

## THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA

With Iwo Jima secure, the Americans now turned to Okinawa. As expected, they met stiff resistance. The 100,000 Japanese soldiers were prepared to defend the island to the death. For three terrible months, American invaders and Japanese defenders fought for control of the island. In the end, the Americans conquered, but victory came at a terrible cost: 12,000 Americans died and another 39,000 were wounded. Japan lost an incredible 92,600 soldiers, and the rest were taken as prisoners of war. Civilian deaths numbered around 100,000. Okinawa was the last battle of World War II. Rather than attempt a manned invasion of Japan, which would likely have resulted in an unjustifiable number of casualties, U.S. president Harry Truman, unleashed the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945.

*Above: U.S. Marines land on the beach of Iwo Jima while Japanese rain artillery fire.*



*Right: The first U.S. flag is raised atop Mount Suribachi on February 23, 1945.*



# WORLD WAR II: THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA

The Battle of Okinawa was an invasion of Japan by largely American forces at the end of World War II. It was determined strategically advantageous to launch the invasion of Japan via the island of Okinawa and its neighboring islands. Okinawa is part of the southernmost portion of Japan. The assault began on April 1, 1945 and lasted more than eighty days. It was extremely costly in terms of resources and lives on both Allied and Japanese sides. This battle is well known for the Japanese use of kamikaze fighter pilots against the U.S. warships.

## KAMIKAZE ATTACKS

After witnessing the effectiveness of kamikaze attacks, the Japanese decided to build planes without landing gear specifically for suicide missions. They were loaded with explosives, and the pilots were locked in for a one-way journey. Death was inevitable, lending these pilots a fearlessness and reckless abandon that allowed them to inflict serious damage to the Allied Forces. Despite the fact that ninety percent of the planes were shot down by outer defenses, and only a small percentage of those that made it through actually found their target, the damage done was immense. What's more, the horrifying notion of sending pilots to their death in these unpredictable and intensely powerful attacks made a tremendous impact on the psyche of Allied Forces.

## THE BLUE BLANKET

Efforts to defend the new form of suicide combat led American naval pilots to create a defensive system called "The Blue Blanket," designed to counter the maneuverability of Japanese fighter planes. John S. Thach, already known for his maneuver the "Thach Weave," designed to counter the maneuverability of Japanese fighter planes, developed a system that combined fighter pilots with a line of small warships located on a perimeter far from the main naval fleet. These warships would monitor incoming Japanese planes on radar, and radio their positions to the hovering teams of fighter pilots overhead. This allowed the Allied pilots to shoot down the planes long before they reached the main fleet.

## ATTACKS DOCUMENTED

Land and naval engagement was well documented through photographs and on film. Likewise, the fires and damage aboard warships caused by incoming fighter planes can also be seen.



Above: A U.S. observation plane flies low over Japanese-occupied Naha, Okinawa.



A U.S. Marine Corps Corsair fighter releases rockets over Okinawa, June 1945.

Such was the quantity of gunfire that went up in the air that Allied Forces were in danger of injury or death from the debris coming back down upon them.

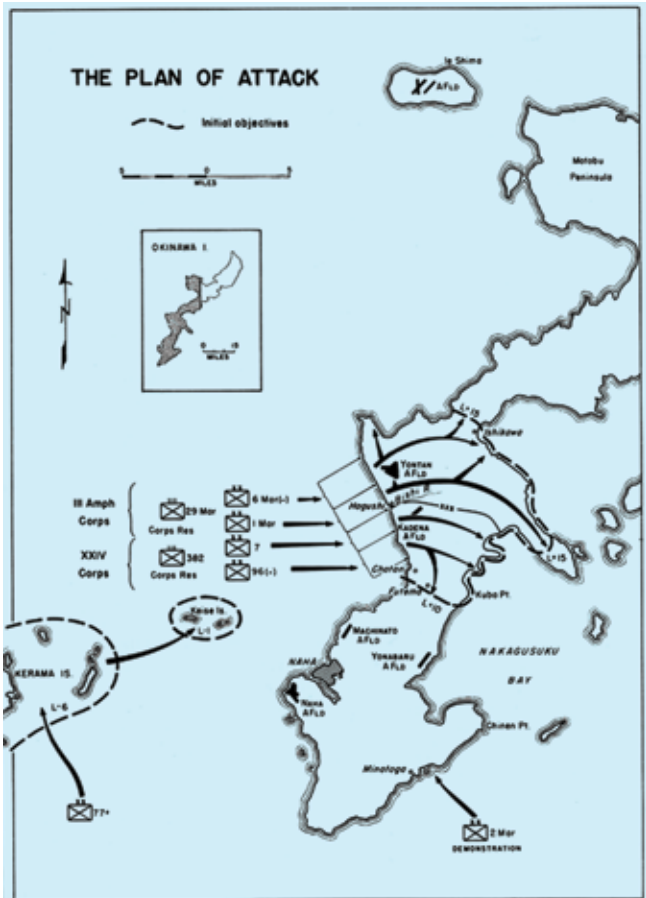
## STAUNCH RESISTANCE INLAND

The land forces met almost no resistance on the coast, but soon encountered a staunch opponent inland, out of the range of the warships at sea. Fighting was virtually deadlocked for a long time, and each side used everything they had: planes, mortars, machine guns, and all manner of explosives, including napalm. The casualties were many, with Japan suffering almost double the number of casualties at around 100,000. Only a couple of months after Okinawa finally fell to the Allied Forces, the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, causing the surrender of the Japanese.



Below: USS Bunker Hill shortly after being hit by two Kamikaze pilots. Approximately 300 Allied vessels were damaged by kamikaze attacks during World War II.

Bottom: The assault on Okinawa was codenamed "Operation Iceburg."



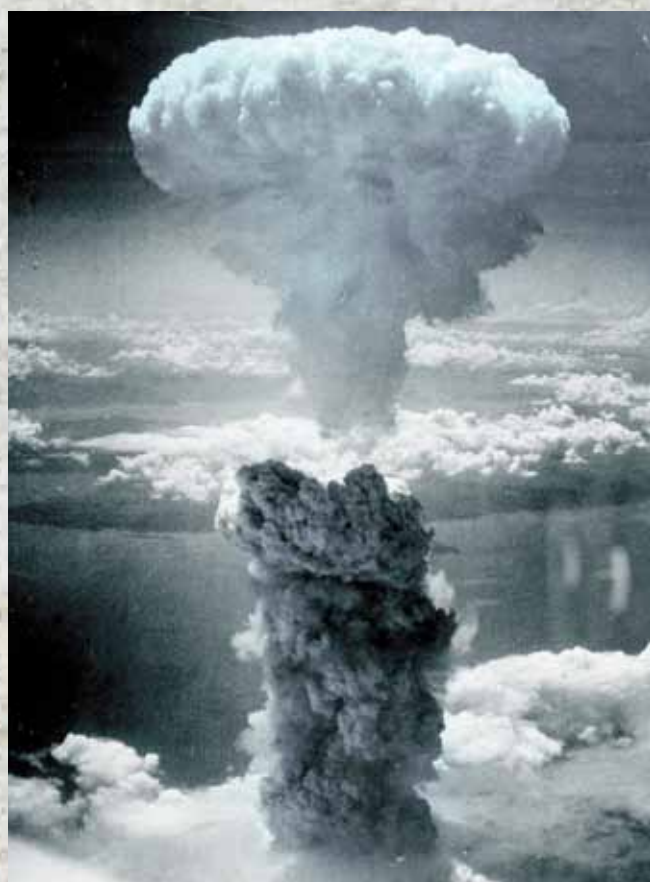


# NUCLEAR WARFARE

World War II effectively ended when the United States dropped nuclear devices on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima (August 6, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945). These are, to date, the only times nuclear weapons have been used in warfare. Optimists hoped that the extraordinary destructive power of these new weapons would deter future wars. The detonation at Hiroshima killed seventy thousand people immediately and ruined more than 4 square miles of territory. Forty thousand people died at Nagasaki and 1.8 square miles were destroyed. Unfortunately, World War II was not the last war—nor even the last major war—on earth.



*Survivor with burns in a pattern that corresponds to the pattern of her kimono worn at the time of the explosion.*



*Above: The mushroom cloud over Nagasaki reached a height of approximately 45,000 feet.*



*Above: A mother and child in Hiroshima four months after the bomb was dropped.*

*Opposite: Looking west northwest from a point 500 feet from where the bomb hit in Hiroshima.*

## Nuclear Powers, 2011

China  
France  
India  
Israel (unacknowledged)  
North Korea  
Pakistan  
Russia\*  
South Africa (all nuclear weapons produced have since been dismantled)  
United Kingdom  
United States



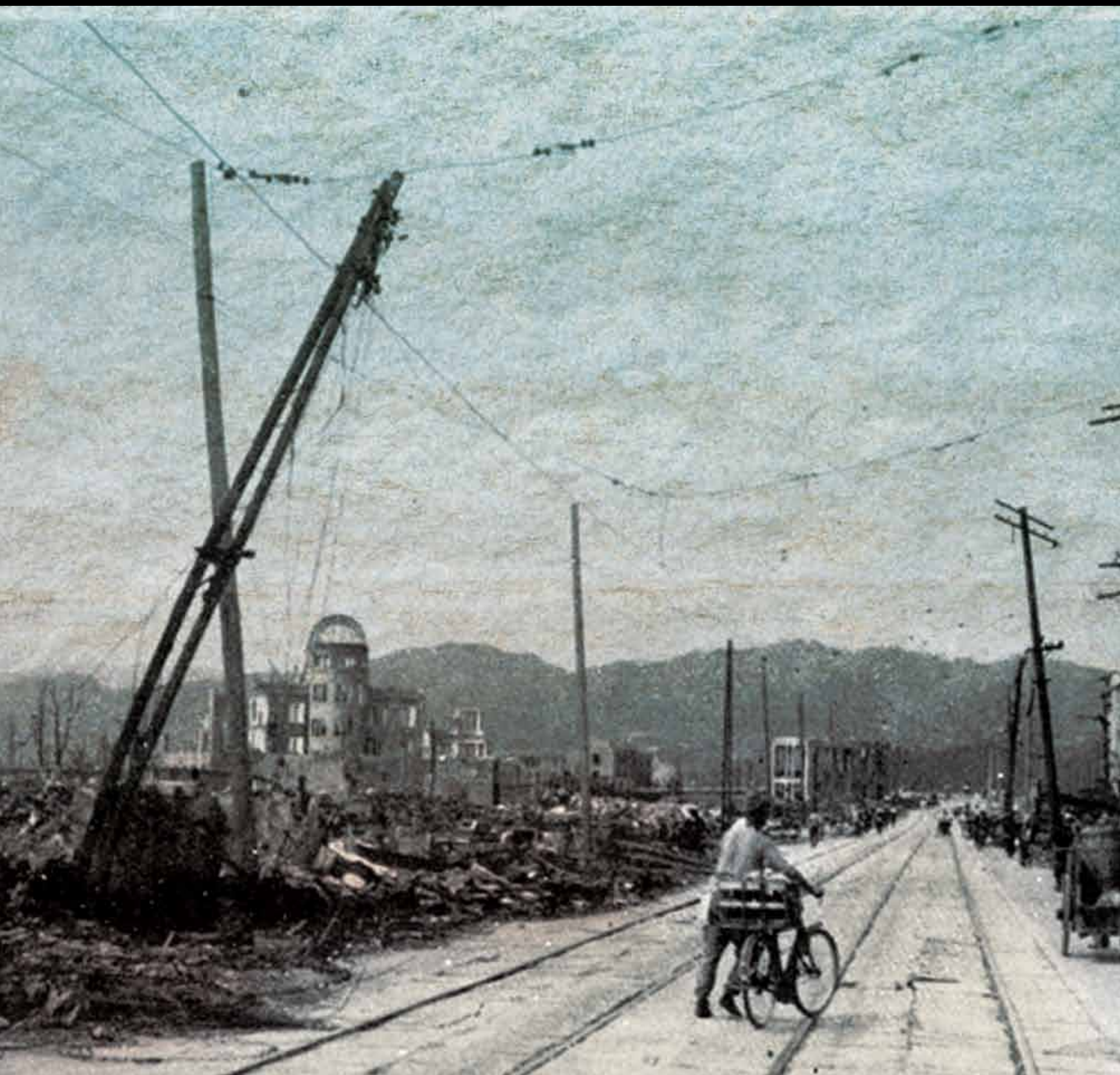


## DETERRENT TO FUTURE WAR

Nevertheless, the threat of nuclear annihilation kept the Cold War, a nonmilitary geopolitical standoff between the United States and the United Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR, or the Soviet Union), from becoming a global holocaust. The United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a neck-and-neck race for years to see who could assemble the more superior nuclear arsenal. Strangely enough, it was the presence of these weapons, designed to win an armed conflict, that actually prevented one from occurring. This strategy became known as MAD or Mutually Assured Destruction. Both countries knew all too well that they would not be able to survive an all-out nuclear war and, as a result, neither side dared to launch the first nuclear missile. Today, a similar balancing act exists, although the number of nuclear nations has grown, and the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki have now been hopelessly outstripped by their larger, far more lethal descendants.

## THE SCIENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Nuclear weapons unleash incredible amounts of energy when atoms are split (fission) or combined (fusion). Fission weapons use some of the heaviest atomic isotopes, uranium 235 or plutonium 239. Building fission weapons that yield more than thirty kilotons of explosive energy—1 kiloton equals 1,000 tons of TNT, the more familiar chemical explosive—is difficult. Fusion weapons, also known as thermonuclear weapons, are fueled by the lightest of isotopes, but can be built to deliver larger explosions with greater ease than fission bombs. The Soviet Union tested the largest fusion bomb ever built in 1961. It released fifty megatons (one million tons), although, theoretically, the explosive power of thermonuclear weapons has no upper limit.





# CHINESE CIVIL WAR

Exactly 2,132 years after Shi Huangdi forged the first Chinese empire in 221 BC, a popular uprising forced the last emperor, seven-year-old Puyi, to abdicate. Although a republican government replaced the imperial one in AD 1911, China dissolved into what is known as the “Warlord Period,” after the provincial military rulers vying for control. The Warlord Period ended with the Northern Expedition (1926–27), when the National Party (Kuomintang) and the Communist Party joined forces to defeat the warlords. As soon as they succeeded, however, the Nationalists turned on their allies. The first massacres in April 1927 marked the beginning of twenty-three years of civil war.



*Sun Yat-sen was a Chinese revolutionary and the founding father of the Republic of China.*

## THE LONG MARCH

The National government, under Chiang Kai-shek, was successful in containing the Communists, who held about fifteen bases in rural areas of central China throughout the twenties and thirties until they were driven out on the “Long March” from 1934 to 1935. In total, there were 100,000 Communists, but, of these, only 10,000 reached the new base in Yan’an, Shaanxi Province. During the Long March, a new leader, Mao Zedong, arose from the Communist ranks. The embattled Communists received much needed aid from the unlikelyst of sources: Japan. Having already invaded Manchuria and Jehol Province from the years 1931 to 1933, Japan seized Peking (Beijing) in 1937, continued on to Shanghai, and, in the last month of the year, captured Nanking, where it committed outrageous atrocities that subsequently became known as the “Rape of Nanking.”

## THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Chiang joined forces with the Communists to combat the Japanese threat. The Nationalists and Communists turned on each other again in 1941, but by then the Communists had made some great leaps forward. During the final two years of World War II, with Japan’s forces occupied elsewhere, both the Nationalists (with American support) and the Communists (with Soviet support) raced to regain sections of occupied China. The Communists relocated to Manchuria, where Mao wisely consolidated, and when he reemerged, the Communists swept through China like a tidal wave, one city after another—Jinzhou, Changchun, Shenyang, Xunbao’an, Zhangjiakou, Xuzhou, Beijing, Nanjing, Xi’an, Shanghai, and Chongqing—falling between October 1948 and December 1949. Mao established the People’s Republic of China at Beijing on October 1, 1949. The war

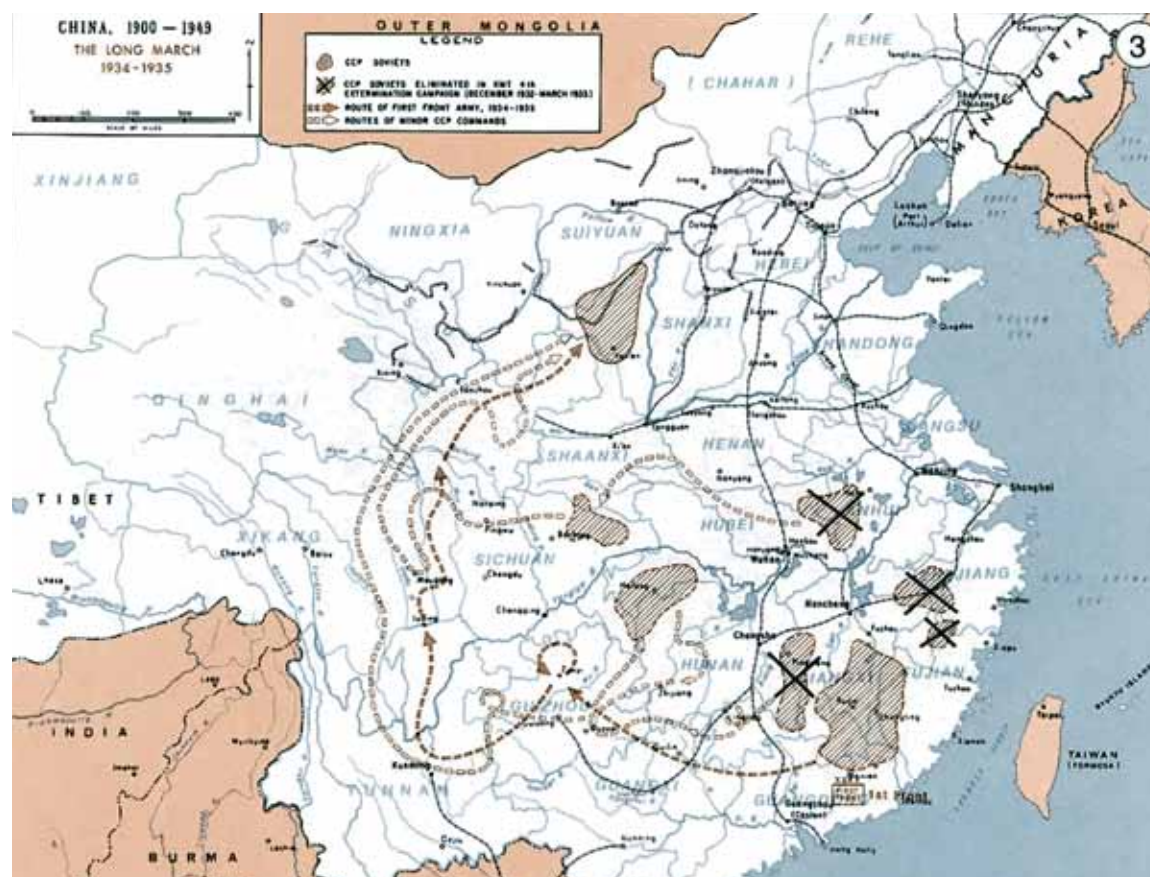
had ended, but no peace treaty was ever declared, and the politically fraught status of Taiwan—the only unconquered province, to which Chiang fled, on December 10, 1949—remains a lingering point of contention today.

*Below: Chinese stamp circa 1955 showing Mao on the hill during the Long March.*



*Left: “The Long March” was actually a series of marches that took place in 1934 and 1935.*

*Below: Chiang Kai-shek led the Nationalist party during the civil war against the Communist Party of China.*





# KOREAN WAR

The Soviet Union and the United States divided the Korean Peninsula at the thirty-eighth parallel in 1945. The decision was designed to facilitate removal of the Japanese. However, trouble erupted between communist Koreans and capitalists, with Soviets and Americans each supporting a different side. Between 1948 and 1950, guerrilla war against the American-backed Republic of Korea (ROK) killed some 30,000. The United States, alarmed by the recent communist takeover of China (see Chinese Civil War, pages 152–53), wanted a bulwark against communist expansion into Japan, the Philippines, and Taiwan. Meanwhile, the leader of communist Korea, Kim Il-Sung (1912–1994), asked both the Soviet Union and China for aid.

## THE THIRTY-EIGHTH PARALLEL

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when the communist Korean People's Army (KPA) crossed the thirty-eighth parallel in a three-pronged attack aimed at Seoul, Kangnung, Chunchon, Inje, and Hongcheon. The Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) fell back, and the American-educated leader, Syngman Rhee, seeking help from the United States, sought and won United Nations sanctions, at one stroke bypassing the need to secure a formal declaration of war from the U.S. Congress and providing diplomatic cover.

## FROM PUSAN TO THE YALU

At first American aid did not seem to accomplish much: the KPA pushed the ROKA all the way to a defensive line called the Pusan Perimeter. Finally, in September, the situation changed, thanks to the depleted ranks of the KPA, recruitment of new ROKA members, and the arrival of American reinforcements. General Douglas MacArthur, the American commander, launched a bold counterattack, landing X Corps at Inchon on September 15, 1950, while the rest of the army pushed north to Suwon. Now the KPA invasion was reversed, with ROKA–American forces pushing north to the Yalu. MacArthur saw victory on the horizon, not just in Korea, but also in China, where he hoped to depose Mao Zedong and deprive the Soviet Union of a key sympathizer.

## COUNTEROFFENSIVE AND STALEMATE

This did not happen. Mao Zedong dispatched an army to relieve the beleaguered KPA. The Soviet Union contributed aircraft and pilots. The ROKA–American troops were forced back into southern Korea. By spring 1951 the war's big backers had tired of the back-and-forth, which had cost hundreds of thousands of lives. The fighting continued for another two years while negotiations stalled. The war ended on July 27, 1953, leaving Kim Il-sung in control of North Korea, Syngman Rhee in South Korea, and a 2.5-mile-wide demilitarized zone gapping between them.



Above: *U.S. Army POW executed in July of 1950.*



Below: *U.S. B-29s sever two railroad bridges near Pakchon in North Korea.*

Below left: *Map showing the attack by North Korea on June 25, 1950.*

Below: *Girl carrying her brother at Haengju, a stalled M-26 tank in the background.*



## Casualties, POWs, and Atrocities

Reliable casualty counts for the Korean War are difficult to come by, in part because guerilla fighters and police officers terrorized villages believed to be strongholds for the opposite side, even as a conventional war between armies raged across the country. Both sides committed atrocities. In addition, especially on the ROKA–American side, many soldiers who went missing in action ended up truly missing, fueling suspicions of mistreatment at rural POW camps in Manchuria. Exchanging POWs became a major sticking point at the negotiating table, not only because of the large number of disappeared soldiers, but also because many POWs had been pressed into service and did not wish to return. Naturally, both sides also feared spies slipping through. In the end, however, between 1950 and 1953, North Korean casualties, including civilians and wounded military, numbered perhaps two million; South Korean, 1.6 million; Chinese, 1.3 million (although official Chinese counts say 400,000); American, 140,000; and UN forces, 14,000. The Soviets lost fewer than 300.



# AFGHANISTAN CIVIL WARS

Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, Russia had engaged in an elaborate dance with Great Britain for control over Afghanistan and neighboring regions. Both sides viewed control of Afghanistan as crucial. Russia saw Afghanistan as an important potential acquisition to its empire. Britain saw a Russian-controlled Afghanistan as a threat to British India as Russia could use Afghanistan as a base to launch an attack on India. This dance, which came to be known as “The Great Game,” set the stage for Soviet involvement in Afghanistan in the late 1970s.

## SOVIET FORCES SUPPORT COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT

In 1978 a communist group in Afghanistan known as the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) took control of the government in an uprising known as the Saur Revolution. A year later the PDPA was threatened by mujahideen rebels opposing the new government. The Soviets intervened to protect the integrity of the PDPA government, leading to protracted military engagements that were largely unsuccessful for Soviet forces. The scattered nature of the mujahideen with their loose organization, as well as their employment of the hilly terrain of Afghanistan, made it nearly impossible to put down the resistance. The Soviets spent significant resources in the struggle. It has often been compared to the U.S. involvement in Vietnam: there was no swift exit, and with protracted war, there was no clear means of obtaining victory.

## GROWTH OF TALIBAN FORCES

It didn't take long to see that the military campaign would not be successful; however, Soviet troops did not withdraw from Afghanistan until 1989. In 1992 the communist government in Afghanistan collapsed, and was replaced by the Islamic State of Afghanistan as set out in the Peshwar Accord. This led to civil war in Afghanistan. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar opposed the Peshwar Accord, and Burhanuddin Rabbani's refused to give up power after his two years in office. The country descended into chaos, and in 1994 a mujahideen fighter Mohammad Omar formed the Taliban. The Taliban would grow in strength and conquer most of Afghanistan over the next seven years.

## RELIGION AND ECONOMICS

While many view the Taliban in terms of their religious convictions, support or resistance to them was based on many more factors, including political and economic ones. Afghanistan is not only resource-rich itself, but is at an important crossroads in Asia, between many markets that want to trade with one another, including the oil- and gold-rich countries of Central Asia.

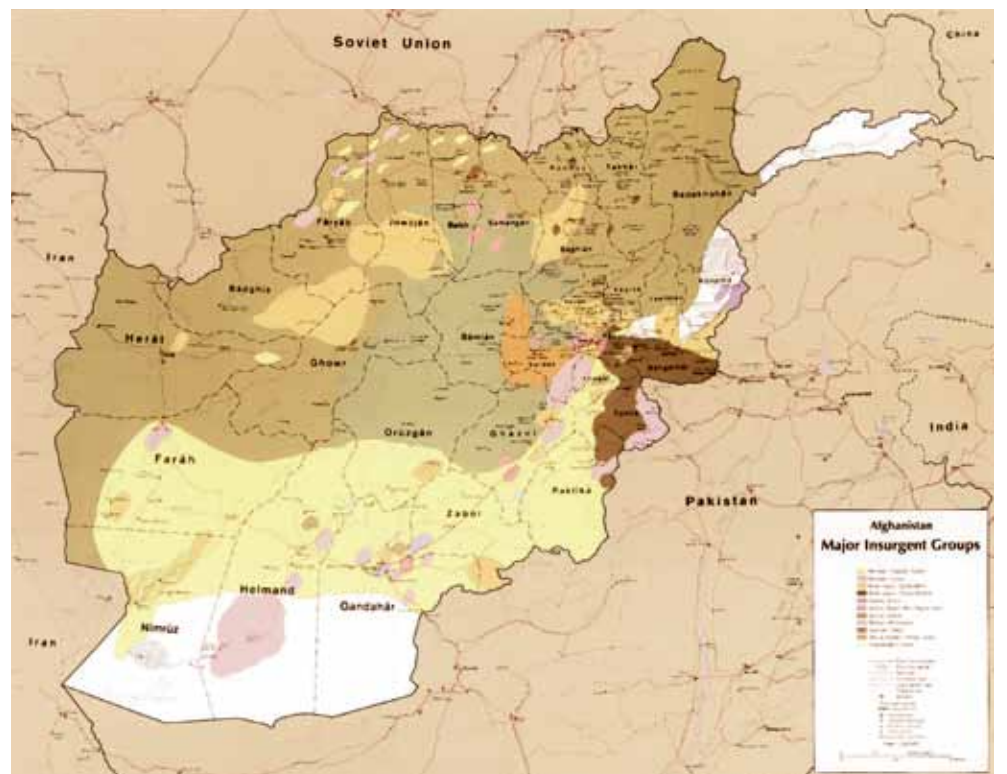
## U.S. AMBASSADOR KIDNAPPED AND KILLED

In 1979 U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Adolph Dubs, was kidnapped and later killed in the wake of the Islamic Revolution in Iran that overthrew the Iranian Shah, who was supported by the United States. Soviets were involved in the raid during which the ambassador was killed, spurring U.S. deployment of warships to the Persian Gulf. War with Iran loomed on the horizon and relations with Afghanistan were tense. Although war was avoided, these events contributed to later U.S. involvement in Afghanistan.

Right: *Afghani parade commemorating the anniversary of the capture of Kabul from the communist regime.*



Below: *CIA map showing the areas where the main Mujahideen factions operated in 1985.*



Right: *A remote mountain pass in Afghanistan. In winter many such passes were rendered impassible.*



# WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

On October 7, 2001, the United States and Great Britain went to war with Afghanistan, whose Taliban government sheltered al-Qaeda, the terrorist group that had orchestrated the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. The international community had previously condemned the Taliban, which had controlled Afghanistan since 1996, for its harsh imposition of extremely strict Islamic laws.



Above: A U.S. F/A-18 "Hornet" performs an aerial refueling procedure in 2001.



Left: U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates observes flight operations supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.



Below: Five ASLAVs (Australian Service Light Armored Vehicles) in the Tangi Valley, March 2011.

## OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

During the first phase of the war, the United States launched four nearly simultaneous attacks (Operation Enduring Freedom): two in the north, where local anti-Taliban groups provided much-needed aid; one on the capital of Kabul; and one on the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar. By December 7 all the primary target cities had capitulated or fallen. A week later, heavy fighting ended in the mountainous Tora Bora region, al-Qaeda's main site of operations. A resurgent Taliban-al-Qaeda force was defeated in Operation Anaconda the following March. The war seemed quite a success—even though al-Qaeda mastermind Osama bin Laden escaped. The Taliban had been driven out, and al-Qaeda scattered.

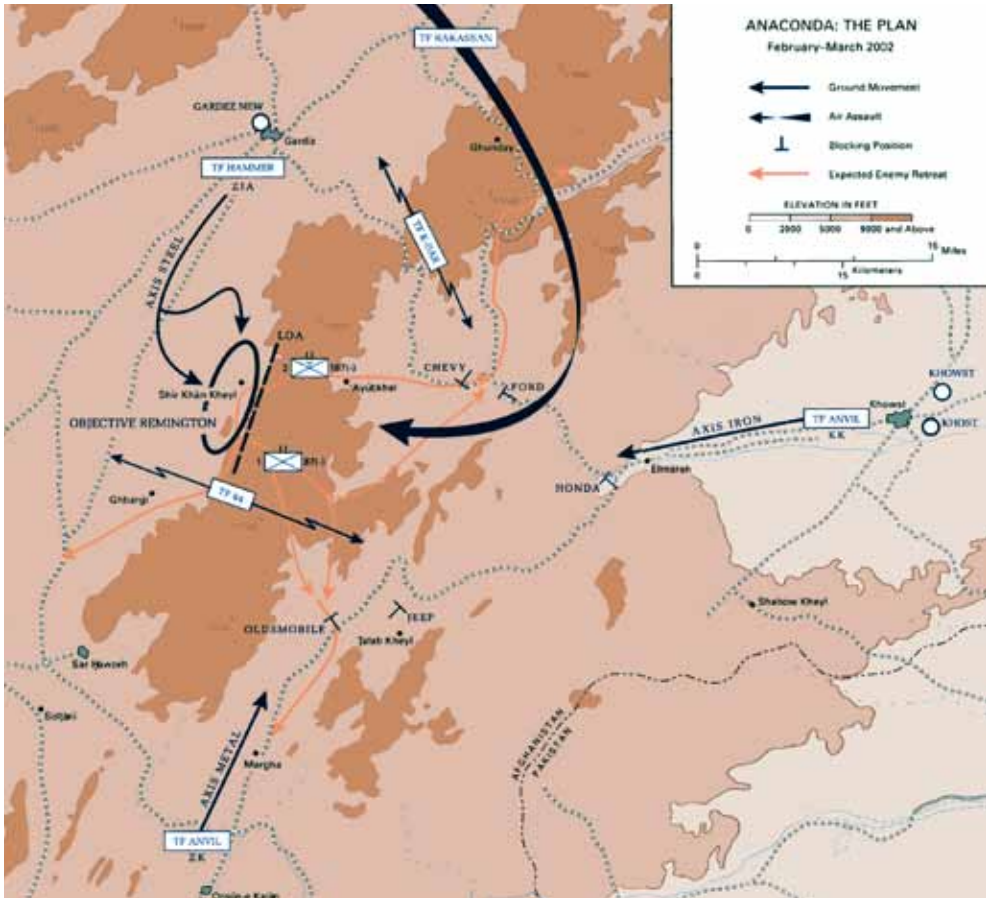
## NATION-BUILDING

In 2002 the United States turned to nation-building, although it found itself hampered on many fronts. Afghanistan had been without a stable government for decades. Tribal traditions prevented strong central control, and ethnic division threatened progress. Poverty, lack of education, inadequate infrastructure, not to mention, the dry, mountainous terrain hampered development, and America's attention, money, and military resources had, meanwhile, been diverted to Iraq. Al-Qaeda reformed on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The newly created government fell victim to incompetence and corruption, and Islamic militants began a guerilla war, using suicide bombers and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to carry out terrorist attacks.

## THE 2009 SURGE

In 2008 Barack Obama was elected U.S. president. In the first few years of his presidency, the focus shifted from Iraq to Afghanistan. By the end of 2009, Obama had sent 33,000 new American troops to Afghanistan, nearly doubling the number of American troops. NATO forces numbered an additional 32,000. The verdict is still out on whether the surge justified the high number of casualties. President Obama also increased the number of drone attacks against terrorist leaders. Notably, special U.S. forces located and killed Osama bin Laden on May 2, 2011.

Left: Operation Anaconda took place in March 2002 and resulted in the removal of the majority of the Al-Qaeda and Taliban presence from the Shabi-Kot Valley.



OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM AND OPERATION ANACONDA	
October 19-20, 2001	U.S. troops raid Kandahar
October 21–November 14	Battle on Shamali Plains
November 14	Capture of Kabul
November 7	Battle in Darya Suf Valley
November 10	Victory at Mazar-e Sharif
November 11	Victory at Taloqan
November 13–23	Battle for Khanabad
November 16	Fighting begins near Kandahar
November 23	Kondoz surrenders without fighting
December 7	Kandahar surrenders; Taliban flees
Mid-December	Battle of Tora Bora
March 2–19, 2002	Operation Anaconda at Shabi Kowt





長白山

西金山

北樓

應安

良元

女直

東樓

白頭

合蘭

福餘

西樓

東顏

遼東

山海關

天津

羽

多力

朝鮮

彭亨

彭亨

彭亨

東山

四國

西海

東海

大明



# 6

## SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Southeast Asia is a diverse region with incredible landscapes and unique cultures, many of which have been heavily influenced by India and China in everything from architectural styles to religion to military strategy. The martial arts tradition in Southeast Asia bespeaks a long, but often troubled, history filled with both battles of epic proportions and individual heroes of legendary skill.

One of the distinguishing features across Southeast Asia is the reliance on rice. Intricate terraces built into steep slopes have facilitated the cultivation of rice for thousands of years, and some, such as the Banaue Terraces, are so immense in scale as to earn a place among the architectural wonders of the world. Rice farming and proper water management in civilizations such as those of Angkor in Myanmar provided social and political stability, which, in turn, allowed for the training and maintenance of large and powerful armies.

The Malaysian Archipelago and the islands of the South Pacific have been home to a diverse array of cultures and civilizations over the last several thousand years. Naturally, the exceptional seagoing ability of these peoples has been central to the cultural, linguistic, and political development of these island civilizations, resulting in an amazing blending of different traditions and beliefs. Hinduism and Buddhism gained early footholds in the region, but Islam became a dominant religion starting as early as the twelfth century AD. The effects of Sanskrit and Chinese languages can be detected in Java and Malaysia. The languages of the Archipelago and South Pacific mostly belong to the Austronesian family, which stretches from Madagascar to Taiwan, through the Archipelago to New Zealand, and as far east as Hawaii. Captain Cook was even able to communicate in Hawaii using language he had learned from the Maori and Tahitians.





# THE MEDANG KINGDOM

The Medang Kingdom emerged as a dominant power on the island of Java in the eighth century. The Canggal inscription of AD 732 gives us the first evidence of the kingdom's establishment in that year by King Sanjaya, who established the Shivaist Sanjaya Dynasty. The Buddhist Sailendra family also ruled Medang.

*Map of the Medang Kingdom showing the shift of power from the central area to the eastern area in the tenth century.*

## THE MEDANG AND ITS RIVALS

The chief rival of the Medang Kingdom was the Srivijayan Kingdom of Sumatra, who eventually defeated the Medang in the tenth century, leading to the end of the kingdom.

The Medang was culturally diverse in its origins, combining local Javanese, Indian, and Chinese traditions, languages, and warfare into its own unique blend. The Medang fostered both Hindu and Buddhist traditions, and the Sanskrit epic Ramayana was central to the culture. The tale of Rama, the king who was denied his throne, however, is presented in a Javanese form, known as the Kakawin Ramayana, whose second half diverges markedly from the original, in part by incorporating local Javanese deities. Rama is usually depicted with his bow and quiver of arrows. The Ramayana continues to be an important fixture in Javanese culture today, and lavish performances of the story are conducted at ceremonies.

During the Medang Kingdom two important temples in the vicinity of Yogyakarta were constructed. One was the Buddhist temple, Borobudur, built by the Sailendra family. The Sailendra appear to have had political and familial ties with the Srivijaya Dynasty of Sumatra, who eventually defeated the Medang. The other temple was the Hindu temple, Prambanan. Both temples are massive and grandiose, exhibiting similarities of construction and style. Built of volcanic rock, the temples are adorned with intricate bas-relief carving depicting scenes from all levels of society. Borobudur was buried in volcanic ash after about the year 1000 and not uncovered until the early nineteenth century, when it gained the attention of British rulers in Java.

## COMMANDING THE SEAS

The carvings on these relief panels show court scenes with kings and queens, agricultural scenes of farmers (rice farming was central to the economy), and military engagements. Straight swords in the Chinese style were used during this period, as well as bows and arrows, shields, and staves. The Medang employed military forces on both land and sea. The Javanese and Sumatrans were avid seamen and had built ships that were capable of navigating large expanses of sea. During this time, a group of Sumatrans settled in Madagascar, more than 3,000 miles away. The language of Malagasy is Austronesian, the same language family as that spoken in Java and Sumatra, and unrelated to the neighboring languages of Africa. In fact, it is closely related to the native languages of Taiwan, New Zealand, Tahiti, and Hawaii, which can only attest to the level of skill in seamanship the cultures of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific possessed. The extensive travel between islands allowed for the passage of goods and ideas from the continent to the north, accounting for the strong influence of Indian and Chinese cultures.

*Below: A bas-relief carving depicting the battle of Lanka as described in the Sanskrit epic, Ramayana.*



*Below: The magnificent Buddhist temple, Borobudur, was built in the ninth century during the reign of the Sailendra Dynasty. The temple's design reflects India's influence but there are sufficient indigenous elements to make Borobudur uniquely Indonesian.*





# JAVA WARS: RISE OF SINGOSARI

The island of Java had been split into two kingdoms, Kediri and Janggala, since the eleventh century. Dominated by its Sumatran neighbor, Srivijaya, and Srivijaya's successor state, Malayu, the eastern Javanese kingdom of Janggala began its emergence in the thirteenth century when a commoner, Ken Angrok, usurped the throne at the capital, Tumapel, in 1222. Almost immediately he set about conquering Kediri, succeeding later that year at the Battle of Gantër. The kingdom of Singosari had been born.



*Emblem of Majapahit showed the arrangement of Hindu deities in the form of a mandala.*



Above: Map showing the Kingdom of Singhasari and its dominance of the Java Sea.

## SINGOSARI

Singosari's greatest king was also its last. Kertanagara (r. 1268–92) solidified his control over Java, sent conquering armies to Jambi (1275), Bali (1284), and Malayu (1286), and cemented an alliance with Champa in an effort to strengthen his position against the Mongol Yuan Dynasty. At the time, Kublai Khan of Yuan (r. 1260–94) was intent on expanding his territory: in 1257, the first invasion of Dai Viet began. Kertanagara was wary of Kublai Khan but nonetheless resolute; when a Yuan envoy arrived in Tumapel in 1289, demanding tribute, Kertanagara refused to pay, branding the envoy's face—an unforgivable insult—and turning him out of the country. The king did not live to see the fruit of his actions—a Mongol invasion—because his vassal, Jayakatwang of Kediri, assassinated him in 1292.



Left: Kubai Khan (1260–1294) was the grandson of Ghenghis Khan and the founder of the Yuan Dynasty.

## THE MONGOL INVASION

A large Mongol fleet set out from Quanzhou in the latter part of 1292, arriving the following spring in northeastern Java, near modern Rembang. Half the army began to march overland while the rest stayed aboard ship and sailed for Surabaya, the rendezvous point. Meanwhile, Kertanagara's son-in-law, Raden Wijaya (or Vijaya), had engaged Jayakatwang in battle. The civil war, raging in the south, left the invading Mongols unopposed. Cleverly, Wijaya sent envoys to the Mongol forces and convinced them that, as rightful ruler, he would submit to Mongol overlordship; he thus turned his natural enemies into powerful allies. From Surabaya the Mongols marched on Majapahit, then on to Daha (modern Kediri), where they crushed the last of Jayakatwang's rebellion. His throne secure, Wijaya showed his true colors, and—thanks to the months the Mongols spent suffering from unfamiliar diseases and the intense heat of the Javanese jungle—it took only one successful ambush on his part to send the Mongols fleeing for home.

Wijaya established a new kingdom, Majapahit, operating from a new capital of the same name. Considered the pinnacle of Hindu Indonesia at its height in the mid-fourteenth century, Wijaya's kingdom included territory from Malaysia to western New Guinea.

Right: Although of humble origins, Ken Angrok (or Ken Arok) became the most powerful ruler of Java, founding the Hindu-Buddhist Singhasari Kingdom and the Rajasa dynasty.



## Failure at Sea

The Mongols must have felt invincible after establishing an empire from Hungary to Korea. But the conquest of the Southern Song in 1279 turned out to be their last real success. As adroit as they were on land, the Mongols could not master the sea, and for conquering the river-filled lands of Southeast Asia—not to mention the Indonesian archipelago—naval expertise was paramount. In addition, the jungles (and war elephants) blunted the Mongols' main strength, their cavalry, and exposed them to all manner of deadly diseases and parasites. Initially, the Mongols had some success against Annam in 1253, but a force of five thousand, sent against Champa in 1281, stalled and was finally defeated at Siming in 1285. At the famous Battle of Bach Dang in 1288, an Annam–Dai Viet alliance inflicted a massive defeat on the Mongols, although subsequently, to avoid trouble, Annam and Champa paid tribute to Yuan. Burma fell more easily in 1287, although not without resistance. Lan Na, in northern Thailand, resisted successfully in 1301.



# THE MATARAM SULTANATE

With very little documentation, the actual origin of the Mataram Sultanate is somewhat murky, but by the 1570s Pamanahan had become king of a major in Java. Ghe Pamanahan was a military advisor to the Sultanate of Pajang, and for his efforts was granted control of lands in central Java. He thus established the kingdom that would become the Mataram Sultanate. He was succeeded by his son, Sutawijaya—also known as Senapati—who defeated the Pajang and greatly expanded the territory of Mataram, which was based near Yogyakarta. He tried to unite Java, but was unsuccessful. Nonetheless, he led aggressive military campaigns that expanded the Mataram Sultanate. His legacy was honored by Sultan Agung, who took the throne in the early seventeenth century and was the first to receive the title “Sultan.”

*A painting depicting the Javanese warrior Surapati in a celebrated act of defiance against the power of the Dutch East India company.*



Below: Bodyguard of Hamengkoe Boewono VI, Sultan of Yogyakarta (1870)



## Modern Remnants of a Martial Tradition

The modern Javanese martial art Pencak Silat is said to have roots that go back to this period of Javanese history. Pencak Silat places the blade at the center of its training regimes, so even weaponless combat is modeled on the techniques that would be used against a knife or longer blade.

## AGUNG OF MATARAM

Sultan Agung is known for his military prowess and campaigns against neighboring kingdoms in Java. Of particular note is his campaign against Surabaya, which lasted five years. The Sultanate of Mataram reached its height under Agung, a strong, military leader as well as a social reformer. He was an avid Muslim and worked to integrate Islam into Javanese culture.

As has so often happened throughout history, the fate of the Mataram Sultanate was tied not so much to any lasting form of governance as it was to the strength of an individual capable of leading his people with vision and determination. Agung passed away in 1645, and the strength of the kingdom quickly deteriorated. Although the Sultanate had contact with the Dutch East India Company even before Agung's ascendance to the throne, the Dutch became an increasingly important political and military force in Java during the seventeenth century. First by influence, and then through acquisition of territory, the Dutch gradually became the dominant power in Java.

## THE SEEDS OF DECLINE

After Agung, Amangkurat I took the throne and implemented violent policies of dictatorship, killing anyone who opposed him. Not surprisingly, this engendered significant dissatisfaction in the realm. Control began to deteriorate almost immediately due to the very actions that were intended to solidify it. Amangkurat was succeeded by his son, Amangkurat II, and then by Amangkurat III. The Dutch, meanwhile, capitalized on the familial and political struggles for power. Mataram first came under their influence in the late seventeenth century, and eventually came under Dutch control in 1749.

As the Dutch East India Company evolved from a seagoing trading power to a land-based company, it became increasingly interested in the political affairs of its territories, and more concerned with local economies and agriculture than the trade upon which it had built its success. The Dutch forced production of

certain crops to feed its engine of international trade, but these misguided efforts only plunged the Dutch East India Company into debt. Their policies in Java ultimately led to the Company's downfall in the late eighteenth century and the revocation of its founding charter.

Below: *Panembahan Senopati (1584–1601) was the first ruler of the Mataram kingdom. He was adopted by the Duke of Pajang and gained power by killing the Duke's main rival, Prince Arya Penangsang.*



Above: Map showing the expansion of the Mataram Sultanate under the reign of Agung Hanyokrokusumo (1613–1645), reaching its peak as the greatest kingdom in Java.



# JAVA WAR

For much of the previous century leading up to this conflict, the Dutch East India Company had been leveraging for greater and greater control of Java and the surrounding islands. As a prominent foreign power, the Dutch East India Company exerted considerable influence and military might to get its way. Primarily interested in the natural resources and goods of Java, the Dutch East India Company became increasingly involved with local affairs, taking over governance of the entire island and forcing production of high-value crops and goods, such as indigo. This shift away from the traditional model of the Company as a trading entity ultimately led it into deep debt, and the Company's charter was dissolved in 1799.

## REVOLT AGAINST THE COMPANY

In 1740, a group of ethnic Chinese revolted against Dutch tyranny, killing fifty Dutch soldiers. In retaliation, the Dutch massacred 10,000 ethnic Chinese. Survivors of the massacre banded together and joined with Javanese troops in opposition to the Dutch, but this alliance was kept quiet and hidden as long as possible. To deceive the Dutch into thinking that the Javanese were still on the side of the Dutch East India Company, Chinese and Javanese forces staged mock battles against each other. Meanwhile, both groups were working together to revolt against the Dutch.

Pakubuwono II of Kartosuro, leader of the Javanese opposition, joined forces with the Chinese and besieged the Dutch in the city of Semarang. His alliance was at first hidden from the Dutch, who requested reinforcements from him to defend themselves against the Chinese. He agreed, but his reinforcements were instead meant to aid the Chinese.

Below: *Semarang, 1741, where the Javanese ruler, Pakubuwono II of Kartosuro, secretly joined forces with the Chinese and besieged the Dutch.*

## EFFECTIVE INSTABILITY

At this time, one Bartholomeus Visscher, a man of unstable character known for his rash, violent decisions, served as leader of the Dutch. When first informed of the rebellion, Visscher



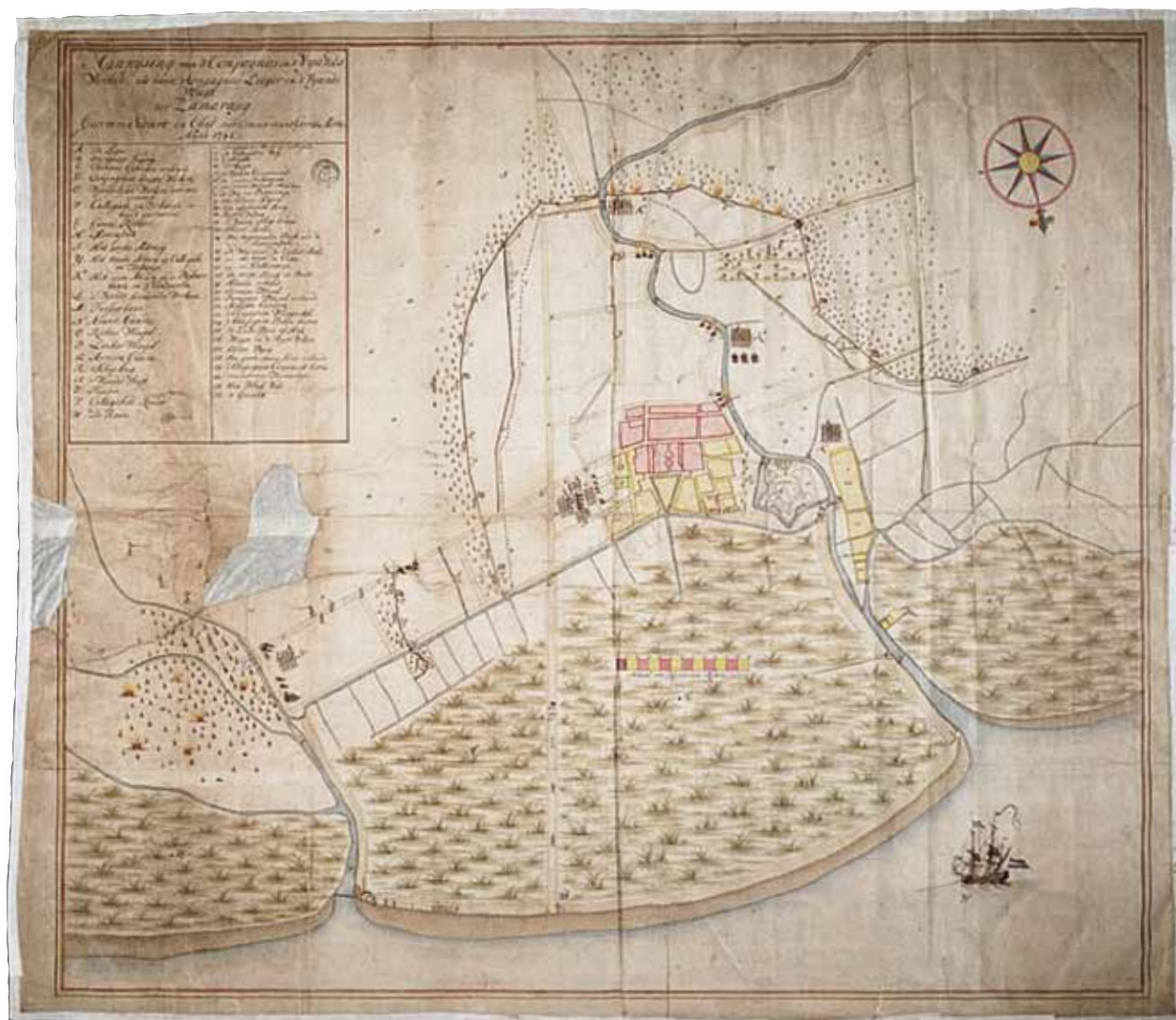
Above: *A drawing of the 1740 Batavia massacre in which thousands of ethnic Chinese were slaughtered by Dutch troops in retaliation for the killing of 50 Dutch soldiers by workers from a Chinese sugar mill. The workers were rebelling against government repression and the threat to their livelihoods.*

did nothing, completely ignoring his advisers and refusing to make any preparations. Then, after several displays of mental instability, Visscher had his own Chinese advisers, Anko and Yonko, arrested and decapitated, ordering the deaths of any and all ethnic Chinese in the region. Unsurprisingly, this only made matters worse and spurred the opposition to greater anger.

In 1742, the Dutch took reinforcements from a disgruntled Mataram war leader, Chakraningrat, making victory for

the combined Javanese and Chinese opposition impossible. Pakubuwono II surrendered and was reinstated by the Dutch, despite widespread unpopularity among his own people. Meanwhile, Chakraningrat, to whom the Dutch had made promises of land and power, was denied any benefit of the aid that he had provided the Dutch.

The Dutch successfully put down all rebellions, despite the mental instability of their leader, Visscher, and despite the numbers and dedication of the Chinese and Javanese opposition. The battles came to a close in 1743 and little more than a decade later, the kingdom of Mataram had essentially ended, and the Dutch had complete political and military control of Java.



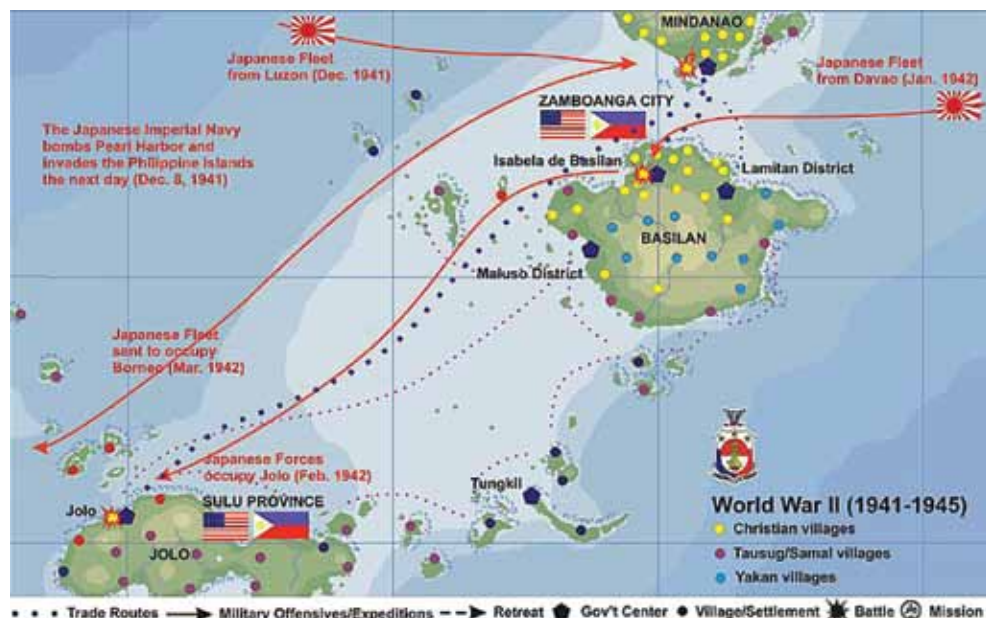


# JAPANESE INVASION OF THE DUTCH EAST INDIES

As is the case with many wars throughout history, the Japanese invasion of the Dutch East Indies in 1941 was a battle not for political power, but rather for control of resources. In various regions, and various time periods, different resources have dominated the political and military aspirations of peoples and nations. In the twentieth century, the resource that became most vital to maintaining a nation's power was oil. Simply put, the Japanese invasion of the Dutch East Indies in 1941 was almost exclusively to establish a stable and secure supply of oil to maintain Japan's military expeditions and campaigns throughout China and the Pacific.



*This stamp from the Philippine Islands portrays José P. Laurel, president in 1943–1945.*



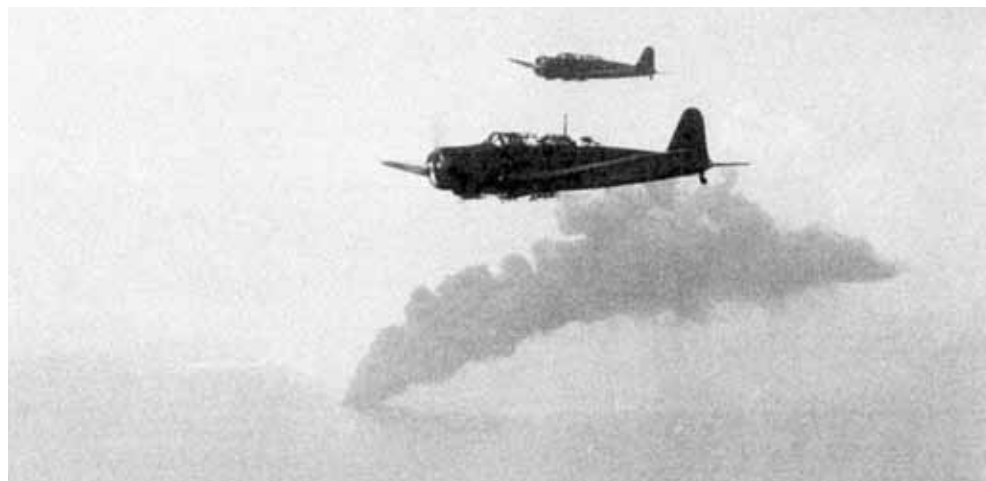
Above: Map showing Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies. At the time of the Japanese invasion in December 1941, Dutch troops in the East Indies comprised about 35,000 men, of whom 28,000 were indigenous.

## JAPAN AND THE DUTCH EAST INDIES

A nation composed of volcanic islands, Japan has no oil resources of its own. In the early twentieth century, the nation relied on imports from the Dutch East Indies and from the United States. In 1941, however, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt placed an embargo on all oil shipments to Japan, and convinced the Dutch to likewise enact an embargo. Roosevelt furthermore froze Japan's holdings in the United States. More than 90 percent of Japan's oil supply had been suddenly shut off. Without an alternate source of fuel, Japan's massive campaigns to conquer China and control the Pacific would be doomed to failure.

The Dutch East Indies had the oil reserves the Japanese needed in order to continue their military efforts. In December 1941, the Japanese launched their invasion, beginning with Borneo. They then led a massive expedition southward, conquering several other islands of the archipelago, including Java, Sumatra, Timor, and Bali. Allied forces attempted to stop the Japanese in the East Indies, forming an Allied command of American, British, Dutch, and Australian forces (ABDA). Allied efforts against the Japanese in the Dutch East Indies were short-lived and ineffective.

Below: A pair of Japanese Nakajima B5N1 torpedo bombers flying over the Java sea on February 17, 1942. In the background, a plume of smoke rises from the sinking Dutch destroyer HNMS Van Nes.



## TORMENT OF OCCUPATION

Japanese control of the islands was total—and often brutal. Local martial arts masters and secret fighters earned reputations as heroes by stealing food from Japanese supplies at night and distributing them to the communities. Allies and local forces on the ground often found a knife more effective as a weapon against the Japanese than anything in the army's arsenal, because the Japanese carried out many attacks silently and secretly at night. Island soldiers learned to remain immobile as enemy soldiers stole up behind them at night, waiting until they were physically grabbed before whipping out their knives and stabbing those behind them.

The effects of the invasion were massive for the islands of the Dutch East Indies. The local populations had for the last 300 years been under the influence and power of the Dutch, who had often mistreated the locals. Many assumed that the Japanese would liberate the islands from such tyranny. The Japanese invasions did, in fact, bring an end to Dutch colonial power in the East Indies, but it did not bring an end to tyranny, and the new Japanese forces that controlled the islands were at least as harsh as their Dutch predecessors. Japanese soldiers took any resource they could from the local populations, including food. Estimates vary on the number of deaths, but it was probably at least three to four million who died from forced labor, starvation, or in resistance.



Above: On December 8, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a declaration of war against Japan following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.



# THE BATTLE OF THE JAVA SEA

On December 8, 1941, Japan launched a massive invasion of Indonesia to secure natural resources—mostly oil and rubber—vital to the continuation of its extensive military campaigns elsewhere. In a sweeping move southward, the Japanese swiftly conquered Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Timor, and Bali.

## A WEAK LINE OF DEFENSE

An Allied force of American, British, Dutch, and Australian soldiers (ABDA) formed to defend Indonesia from the Japanese invasion. The Allied forces came together early in 1942, and their resistance was short-lived and ineffectual. On February 27, 1942, the Allied forces combated the Japanese in the Battle of Java Sea, where they were outnumbered and outgunned. The Japanese ships had greater firepower and greater range, so the Allied destroyers had little hope of succeeding in pitched battle at sea. The Japanese began firing first, and the Allied ships responded with fire more out of a sense of obligation and a desire to keep the morale of the men on board from sinking. Despite the Japanese shells whizzing by the Allied ships, the Allied shells initially fell short and landed in the sea.

As the two fleets advance toward each other, the HMS *Exeter*, the most advanced ship of the Allied fleet, took a shell through its steam pipe. Although the shell did not explode, the ship could travel at only half the speed of the rest of the fleet because of the punctured steam pipe. Because it could no longer keep up, it turned away toward Surabaya. Along the way, the destroyer HMS *Electra* was sunk while accompanying the

*A US Newspaper from February 1942, describing the Battle of the Java Sea.*



*Exeter*. The *Exeter* was the only ship equipped with radar, which was a new technology at the time, and inclement weather made observations difficult for the fighter pilots circling above.

## DAMAGE AND INSUFFICIENCY

This was not the first time the *Exeter* suffered severe damage. Little more than a year earlier, the ship had taken several shells off the coast of South America while battling against the German ship *Admiral Graf Spee*. The day, following the Battle of Java Sea, the *Exeter* attempted to leave Surabaya under escort, but the Japanese attacked, and it ultimately sunk, along with the HMS *Encounter* and the USS *Pope*. Almost the entire Allied fleet was sunk, and more than 2,000 Allied soldiers were killed on February 27 and 28, 1942, in the Java Sea. The battle delayed the Japanese invasion by one day, and the failure of the

Right: *The Japanese cruiser Haguro was the last of the Myoko class of heavy cruisers in the Japanese navy. Ships of this class were over 650 ft long and carried two aircraft. They were the world's most heavily armed cruisers with ten 8-in guns in five twin turrets.*



Above: HMS *Exeter* joined the allied defense of the Dutch East Indies against the Japanese invasion. Badly damaged in the Battle of the Java Sea on February 27, 1942, she was sunk two days later while attempting to reach the Sunda Strait.

*Exeter* led to a limited Allied naval presence in Indonesia. Only one Japanese destroyer was damaged, while five Allied warships were lost. Little more than a week later, 20,000 Allied troops surrendered to the Japanese on Java.

Despite repeated attempts to halt the Japanese advance through Indonesia, both before and after the Battle of Java Sea, Allied forces suffered from inferior firepower, fewer resources, and weaker organization. Their resistance to the Japanese onslaught was thoroughly ineffectual, and would largely be abandoned after the series of failures early in 1942. Later attacks against the Japanese would come to a head on the Japanese islands themselves, such as the invasion of Okinawa in 1945. It is natural to wonder what additional power the United States would have been able to lend the Allied resistance in Java had they not suffered such a loss of men, armaments, and equipment only a few months earlier at Pearl Harbor.

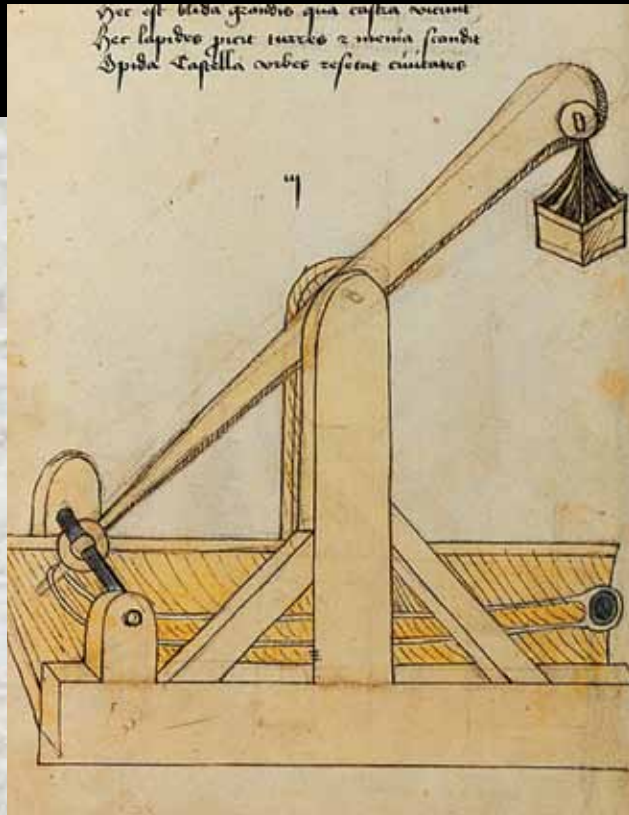


# THE OLDEST WEAPON

What is the oldest weapon of humankind? Stock (wood sticks) and stone must be among the oldest—they are the simplest and most instinctive of weapons. A strong wooden staff provides greater distance between fighter and opponent, and when wielded with strength, speed, and skill can be a ferociously deadly weapon. The stone provides yet greater distance when thrown as a projectile. Readily available without any modification, a stone can be a simple but thoroughly effective weapon against man or beast.

## STOCK AND STONE

As humankind progressed, new ways of using these two elements—stock and stone—were developed and perfected. The sling, one of the oldest and most effective weapons in history, was developed as an extension of the human arm. Its use continues even to this day, attesting to its effectiveness as a long-range weapon. By extending the leverage of the human arm with a flexible string and pouch, the sling is capable of hurling stones hundreds of meters with surprising accuracy. The range of the sling, in fact, typically surpasses that of the later bow and arrow. In siege warfare, the sling was fitted onto the end of staves, and this concept was carried further in the development of trebuchets.



Left: A catapult is a mechanism that is employed to hurl large stones over considerable distances without the aid of gunpowder. A trebuchet is a variant that uses the energy of a raised counterweight and sling to hurl rocks weighing over 300 lb.



Left: The biblical story of David and Goliath from the First Book of Samuel describes how the young David, the future King of Israel, confronted and killed the giant Philistine warrior Goliath armed only with a sling. A sling typically has a small pouch in the middle of two lengths of cord.





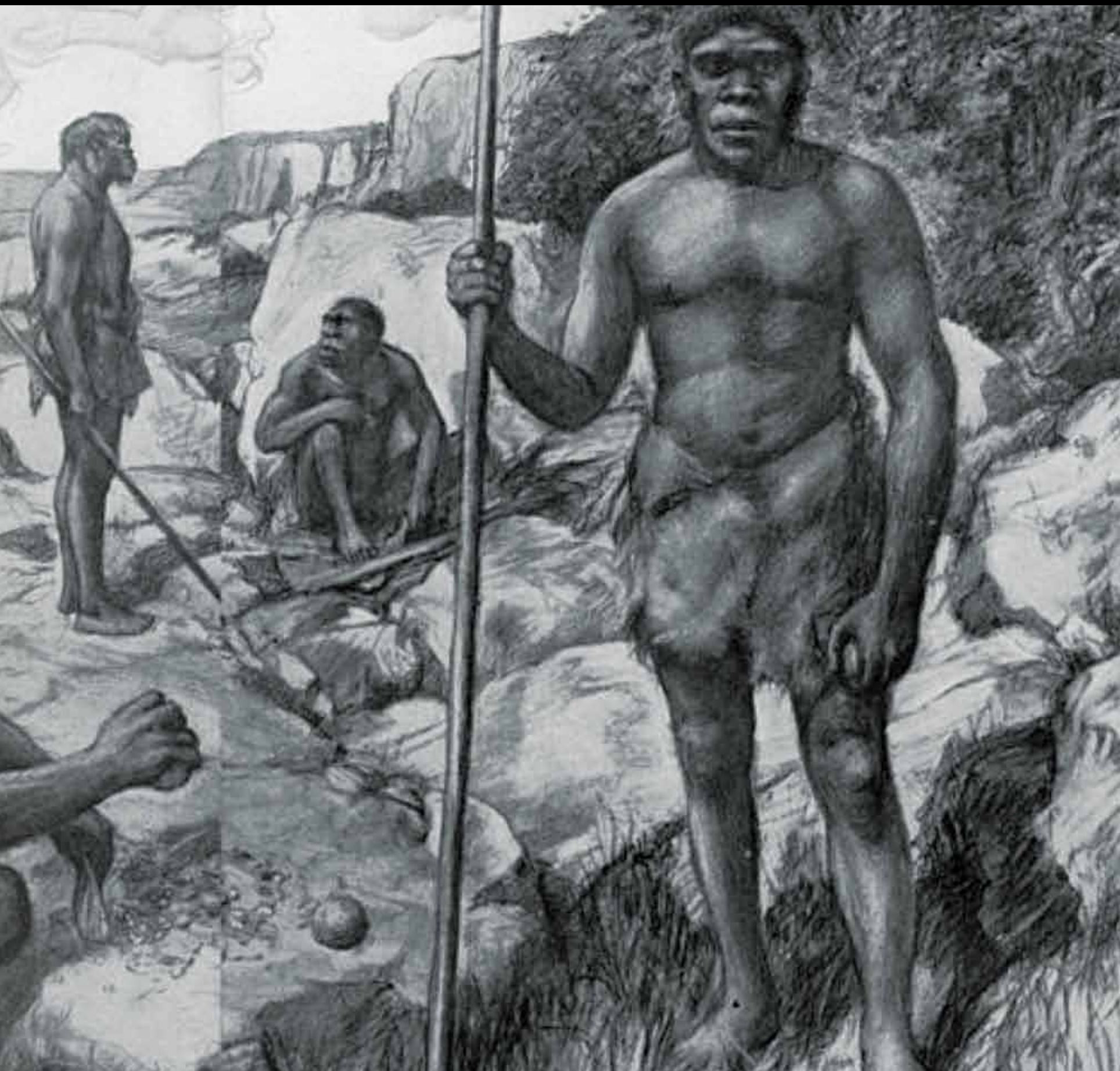
Early in humankind's development came the process of flintknapping, striking or pressure-flaking flint, chert, or obsidian to produce broad, flat blades. These types of volcanic rocks fracture conically, allowing a skilled flintknapper to send guided fractures across the surface of the stone, thus diminishing its thickness without sacrificing much width. Combining this new technology in stone with a wooden staff created another ancient weapon: the spear. With the strength and reach of a staff and the cutting and piercing ability of a knife, the spear has been in constant use for thousands of years with little change.

Taking these technological advancements a step further led to the development of the atlatl, a combination of sling technology with the spear. By extending the lever arm of the spear thrower, the atlatl allows for greater force and range in throwing a spear or dart. Which technology came first—the sling or atlatl—is debated, but the trend is clear: weapons developed over time to allow for greater distance between combatants and their opponents, whether human or animal.

## HUMANKIND'S GREATEST WEAPON

Before even the stock or the stone, however, there were other innate and powerful weapons used by humankind to claw its way to the top of the food chain. First, there were bare hands. Second, they developed the endurance to engage in persistence hunting; tracking animals until they dropped dead from exhaustion. And third, there was the intelligence that allowed early humans to stalk, coordinate, communicate, and develop new technologies. The oldest—and most powerful—weapon must be the human mind.

*Below: Drawing of the Rhodesian Man whose skull was discovered in 1921, regarded as a southern representative of the Neanderthal race. Neanderthals are known to have used stone in hand axes and spears made of wooden shaft with very sharp spearheads securely attached.*





# KAMEHAMEHA I

In Hawaii, the appearance of a flaming “star” (probably Halley’s Comet in 1758) was identified as Kokoiki, prophesying the coming of a great king, likely Kamehameha I, whose name means “The Very Lonely One,” or “The One Set Apart.” This mighty king unified, for the first time, Hawaii’s warring factions into a single kingdom.

## First Contact

Captain James Cook, the first European to sight Hawaii, arrived in 1778, during Kamehameha’s lifetime. Relations between the first Europeans and Americans and the Hawaiians were not always harmonious; on both sides, numerous massacres, kidnappings, and thefts occurred, one of them leading to Cook’s murder in 1779 at Kealahou Bay. Other dealings, however, were quite friendly and led to exchanges of goods. Among these were guns and cannon, which played a large role in Kamehameha’s conquests, especially at the Battle of Nu’uanu. Before the arrival of guns, Hawaiian warriors had almost exclusively used spears, which the best warriors—eschewing shields—would catch as they flew across the battlefield.

## ON THE BIG ISLAND

Kamehameha was the nephew of King Kalaniopuu of the island (not the chain) of Hawaii. When Kalaniopuu died in 1782, he left his kingdom to his son, Kiwalao, but placed the war god in the care of Kamehameha. Although this was a great honor and responsibility, Kamehameha’s ambition was not satisfied. Soon the cousins became bitter rivals, and chiefs began to pick sides. Kalaniopuu died in January; by summer, his successors had resorted to a brief but intense war culminating in the Battle of Mokuohai, in which Kiwalao died. Several of his supporters, however, took control of the Big Island.

Fighting between Kamehameha, Keawemauhili, as well as Kiwalao’s brother Keoua of Kau, dragged on through 1785. Then, while Kamehameha occupied himself conquering Maui in 1790, Keoua invaded Hilo, killing Keawemauhili and then pressing on to other districts. Kamehameha raced home from Maui to meet his cousin in battle, driving him back to Hilo. In November 1790, as Keoua’s forces retreated, Kilauea erupted, killing a large portion of Keoua’s army, although Keoua himself did not die until 1791, in a battle near Pu’ukohola, the still-famous *heiau* (open-air temple). With Keoua’s death, Kamehameha secured control of the entire island.



*One of the few paintings made of Kamehameha during his lifetime—and reportedly his favorite. Also known as Kamehameha the Great, he formally established Hawaii as a unified kingdom with the help of firearms traded with Britain and the United States.*

## IN THE ARCHIPELAGO

Although Kamehameha had already started to expand beyond Hawaii, he faced a formidable opponent in Kahekili, who had conquered Oahu in 1783; Kahekili also controlled Maui, Lanai, and Molokai. Although Kamehameha defeated Kahekili and his brother Kaeo (king of Kauai) in a naval battle in 1791, the brothers still presented a major impediment. Then, in July 1794, Kahekili died, leaving his son Kalanikupule to battle with Kaeo for control of his islands. Kalanikupule was victorious in 1795, but by now Kamehameha was on the move, seizing Maui and Molokai. In April, he met Kalanikupule in one of Hawaii’s most famous battles, Nu’uanu. Kamehameha’s forces, although weakened by a major defection, drove Kalanikupule’s up the steep Nu’uanu cliffs, where more than four hundred of them were pushed into the sea, more than a thousand feet below.

Kamehameha’s victory at Nauruan secured his control over all the islands except Kauai and Niihau, and although two attempts to invade Kauai failed, these two islands were ceded to him in 1810. Hawaii remained a unified kingdom until 1893, when the United States seized the islands.



*Above: A watercolor painted by John Webber, artist aboard Captain Cook’s ship Endeavour. Ironically, Cook was killed by Hawaiians during his third exploratory voyage to the Pacific.*



*Above: Some of the fiercest fighting for dominance over Oahu occurred on the Kooloa Ridge, the site of an old volcano. In 1795, Kamehameha pushed the native forces up to Pali Lookout, where many were captured or perished.*



# THE MAORI

The Maori forged a major civilization on New Zealand, one that was not threatened by European colonization until the nineteenth century. Despite their use of stone and bone tools, the Maori were well organized in their production of food, settlements, and art.

## MAORI INNOVATIONS

With a culture closely tied to the sea, the Maori built large and ornately decorated canoes, called *waka*, which were capable of carrying dozens of warriors, who would propel the boat with wooden paddles. *Waka* were built from totara trees, which grow to great thickness. Because the Maori were, despite their advancement, still a Stone Age people, they required a combination of fire and stone tools to fell and shape the trees into *waka*. The process was incredibly involved and took a long time.

The Maori built large hill forts composed of several layers of defense. These hill forts, called *pā*, consisted of anything from a simple settlement surrounded by a palisade to a massive, multileveled fortification with housing, storage facilities for food and water, and stockpiles of weapons. As contact with Europeans increased and the Maori defended these forts against greater and greater firepower, the traditional construction of the *pā* began to incorporate new features and earthworks designed specifically for defense against guns.

## WEAPONS OF THE MAORI

Various kinds of spears and clubs, including the *patu*—a stone, paddle-shaped club capable of inflicting debilitating damage at close range—were the primary weapons of the Maori. *Patu* were often made of pounamu, a type of greenstone. These particular *patu* were called *mere*. Much Maori sculpture is made from the same green jade.

The Maori were a warlike people and practiced cannibalism. The fact they derived strength from eating the flesh of their enemies, and that is partially true: on the warpath, Maori would make captives carry the flesh of their fallen comrades as a food source. The captives themselves would often end up serving as food for the victorious tribe. When Europeans first encountered Maori in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, many were reportedly cannibalized. Cannibalism was practiced widely throughout the islands of the South Pacific, and its practice has reportedly continued in some remote areas even into the late twentieth or twenty-first centuries.

Right: A war leader of his tribe Hongi Hika was one of the first to use European weapons to conquer most of the North Island, in the first of the so-called “Musket Wars.”



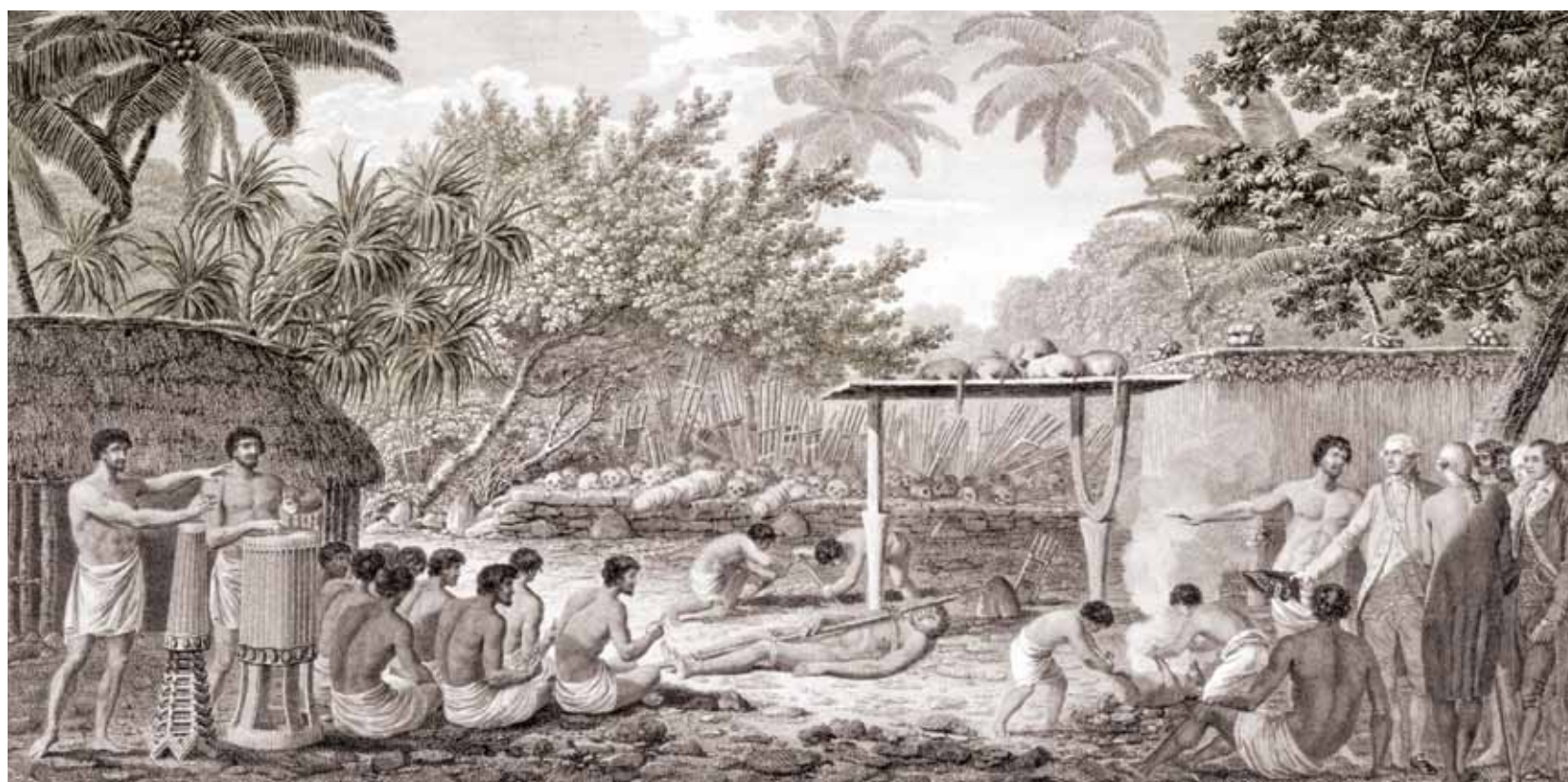
Above: This map shows the major iwi movements of the 1820s caused by the intertribal conflicts known as the Musket Wars. Muskets changed the face of intertribal warfare, decimating some tribes and driving others out of their traditional areas. European settlers moved in to large areas of land left following the deaths of thousands of Maori warriors.



## Giants Walking the Earth

When the Maori arrived in New Zealand in the late thirteenth century, the island was home to immense flightless birds, called moa. Moa in the north were up to 12 feet tall and could weigh more than 500 pounds. Prior to human settlement of the islands, their only natural predator was the Haast's eagle, a massive raptor that stood nearly 3 feet tall, weighed up to 33 pounds, and possessed powerful legs and large talons. The Maori hunted the moa to extinction, and with its primary food source gone, by the early 1400s the Haast's eagle seem to have disappeared as well. Scholars speculate as to whether the large birds in Maori legends may refer to these eagles. They reportedly killed human beings, which is certainly plausible considering the size of their usual prey, the moa.

Below: When the English navigator was visiting Tahiti, formerly known as Otaheite, in 1773, he witnessed ritualized human sacrifice, often performed before going to war.





# AUSTRALIA: THE BLACK WAR

In 1803, the British began the first permanent settlement of Tasmania, an island off the southeastern coast of the Australian mainland. At that time, roughly 4,000 Aborigines, inhabited the island. Separated from the Aborigines on the mainland for several thousand years after rising water levels separated Tasmania from Australia, the Aborigines of Tasmania were linguistically and culturally distinct from those on the mainland.

## HUNTER-GATHERERS AGAINST THE BRITISH

A Stone Age people, the Tasmanian Aborigines relied on hunting and gathering for their subsistence. The island was divided into regions that provided the hunting territories for the various familial groups. They also relied heavily on sea life for food. Their weaponry consisted of wooden spears, clubs and throwing sticks, and stone tools. They used boomerangs and a bowl-like spear thrower known as a woomera, which was similar in function to an atlatl, magnifying the force used to hurl a spear. The Aborigines were not capable of offering any organized defense against the British, whose technology was so far advanced as to leave little hope for the local population in any kind of armed struggle.

As soon as the British started to populate the island, settlers began to take prime hunting areas and claim them for their own use. With their guns, the settlers were able to hunt far more effectively, and quickly took down the local populations of kangaroo. Worse than all this, these settlers treated the Aborigines

as less than human, and committed many atrocities against them, killing the men, raping the women, and treating them in a generally debasing and humiliating fashion. With little chance of success in an open struggle, the Aborigines could only hope to find success in surprise attacks and against isolated individuals.

## END OF AN ERA, END OF A PEOPLE

The conflict continued for decades, and the numbers of Tasmanian Aborigines quickly declined to only about 200 in the early 1830s. An effort was made to sweep them out of the bush as if they were rabbits and drive them into one corner of the island, but this effort failed. Eventually, the British persuaded the remaining Aborigines to settle the island of Flinders in the Bass Strait. By 1890, the last full-blooded Aborigine had died. Some Aborigines intermarried with whites, but the white settlement of Tasmania effectively wiped out the entire population. Many were killed in armed conflict, but most suffered from loss of food or from diseases brought by white settlers to which they had no immunity.

Although there was no major battle or organized armed clash to speak of, the conflict dragged on for some time before it ended, essentially in the annihilation of the local population. By 1830, Governor George Arthur placed the island under martial law. In his *Voyage of the Beagle*, Charles Darwin gives an account of the decline of the Aboriginal population of Tasmania, which at the time was called Van Diemen's Land. Darwin notes with sadness the necessity of relocating the Aborigines was likely due to the initial misconduct of his countrymen. Darwin also notes the aboriginal skill in navigating the bush and blending in completely with the surrounding landscape at will to stalk animals for food or remain unseen for defense.



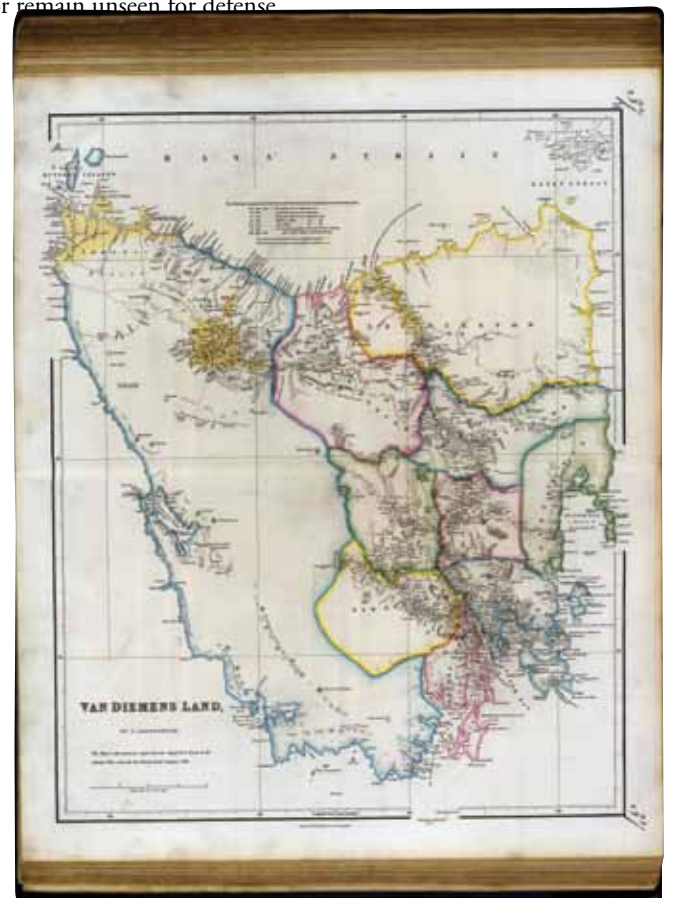
*George A. Robinson. Following the Cape Grim Massacre of Tasmanian Aborigines in 1828, Robinson was called upon by the British to lead a "friendly mission" to conciliate between the settlers and Aborigines who were to be rounded up and temporarily relocated to a camp on Flinders Island. The Tasmanian natives were promised food, housing, security, and a place to practice their cultural traditions.*



*Above: Truganini (seated right) had negotiated terms for her 300 remaining people with the British representative George A. Robinson. Here, she is photographed as one of the last four native Tasmanians.*



*Above: "Group of Natives of Tasmania" (1859, oil on canvas) by Robert Dowling.*



*Below: Map of Tasmania (then Van Diemen's Land) 1852.*



# THE PHILIPPINES

By the time the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, the Philippines had been under Spanish rule for more than 300 years. But Spain had grown weak, many of her former colonial dominions already lost, and the Filipinos—including Philippine-born Spaniards (*insulares*) as well as indigenous peoples (*indios*)—had begun to sound the tocsin of independence. In 1892, Spanish authorities arrested one José Rizal, an *insulare* who had formed a society pushing for reform (not revolution). The ill-considered arrest precipitated the formation of a much more militant group, the Katipunan.



Above: Jose Rizal was a passionate advocate of reform in the Philippines but was equally resolute in his opposition to rebellion. Nevertheless, Rizal was accused of rebellion, sedition, and conspiracy and, convicted on all three charges, was sentenced to death by firing squad.



Above: Jose Rizal (1861–1896) is regarded as the foremost Filipino patriot and is one of the national heroes of the Philippines. His execution day on December 30 is known as Rizal Day, and is celebrated as a national holiday.

## AGUINALDO'S REBELLION

Plans to oust the Spanish were discovered on August 23, 1896. The Spanish military presence in the Philippines, although hardly impressive, was more than capable of dealing with the poorly organized and equipped Katipunan. The revolt, which began on August 30 at San Juan del Monte, was confined to Luzon, the largest island and the location of Manila. Manila, the economic heart of the country, was the grand prize, but the revolutionaries never came close to winning it. After several ignominious defeats, the rebels surrendered on December 14, 1897. The Treaty of Biak-na-Bato sent the Katipunan leadership, including the president, Emilio Aguinaldo, into exile in Hong Kong, along with 400,000 Spanish pesetas, half of which Aguinaldo committed to continuing the revolution.



Above: Map showing route sailed by Commodore George Dewey to attack the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay in 1898.

## AMERICAN INTERVENTION

When America and Spain declared war on each other in April 1898, Commodore George Dewey, in command of the Asiatic Station ships at Hong Kong, sailed to attack the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. Although Dewey was outnumbered and on enemy ground, he delivered a crushing defeat on May 1, 1898. Seeking to capture Manila, Dewey unleashed Aguinaldo on Luzon. His forces quickly seized control of the entire island—except Manila. Then, more than 10,000 American troops showed up, seized the city, and rather imprudently showed Aguinaldo the door. At the Treaty of Paris (December 10, 1898), Spain handed several possessions, including the Philippines, over to the United States; Aguinaldo had already declared independence in September. It took just one more incident, the shooting of a Filipino officer by an American, to start a new war. From February to November 1899, the American army drove the Filipinos out of the Luzon plains and into the mountains. It took until 1902 and 126,000 soldiers to defeat the Filipinos. Some 16,000 Filipinos and 4,234 American soldiers died; up to 200,000 civilians also died from war-related causes. At the end of the war, the United States found itself in the uncomfortable role of a colonial power; the dream of Philippine independence would be put off for another forty-four years.



Below: Shortly after hostilities were exchanged at the beginning of the Spanish-American war, USS Olympia (lower left) led the U.S. Asiatic Squadron, in the destruction of the Spanish fleet off Cavite on May 1, 1898.

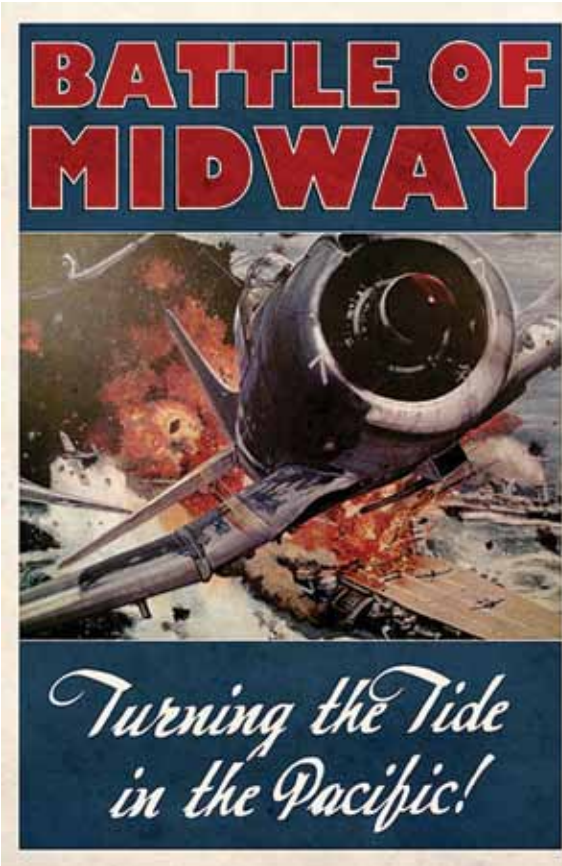


# WORLD WAR II: PACIFIC THEATER

World War II truly began in the Far East in 1931, when Japan invaded Manchuria. The Japanese invaded China in 1937; when France surrendered to Germany in 1940, Japan expanded into Indochina, then governed by French colonials. That same year Japan allied with Germany and Italy, completing the “Axis” alliance. Finally, when Japan pushed into southern Indochina in 1941, the United States imposed economic sanctions, insisting that Japan give up all territory occupied since 1931. By then, however, Japan had whetted its appetite for expansion and had no inclination to bow to American demands.



*The 1931–34 China Incident War Medal, awarded to Japanese servicemen who had fought in China.*



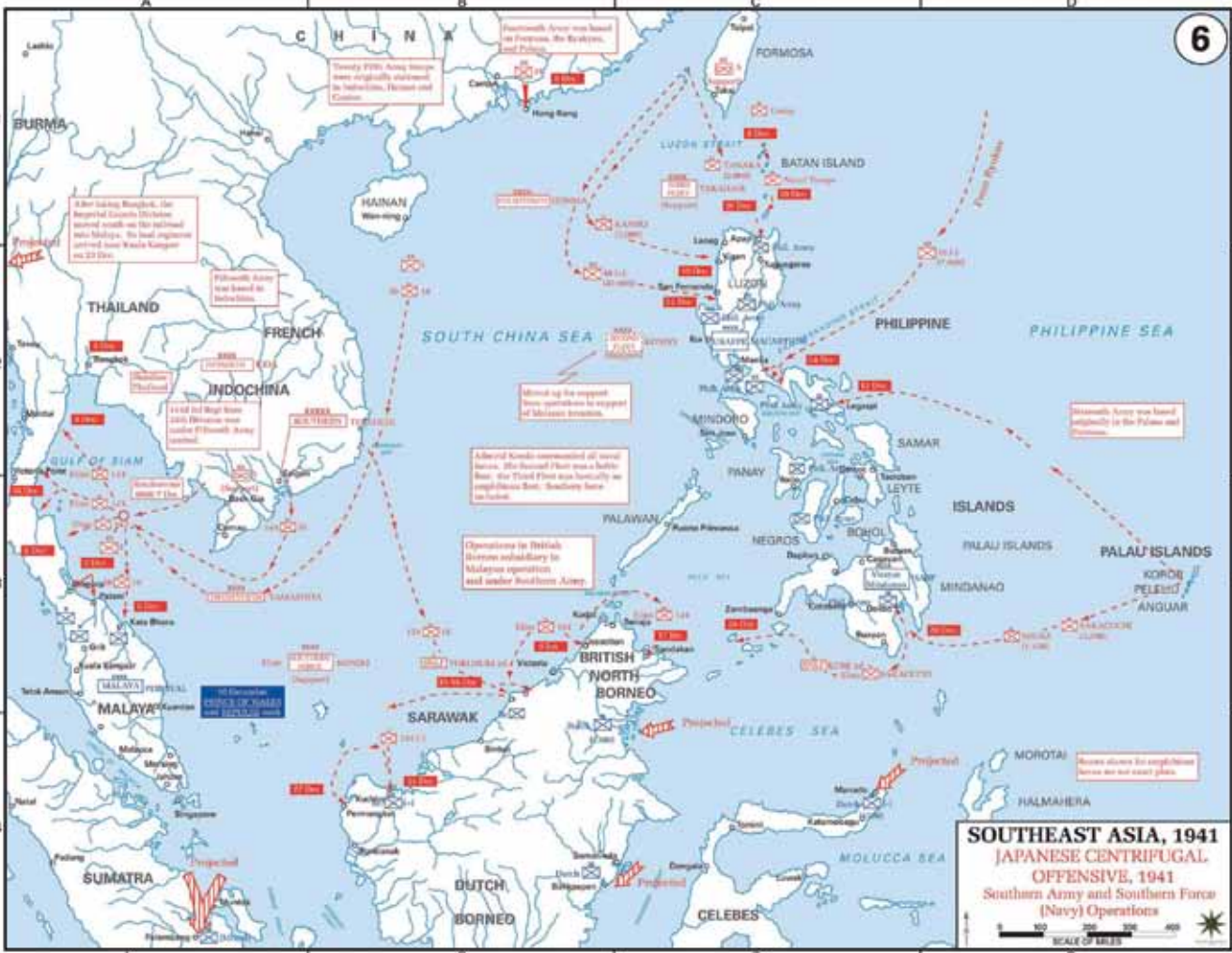
Above: Poster designed to commemorate the Battle of Midway, June 4–7, 1942. The battle did indeed “turn the tide” in the Pacific and is considered to be one of the most important naval battles of World War II. The U.S. Navy decimated Japan’s naval might by sinking four aircraft carriers and destroying 322 aircraft.

**CENTRIFUGAL OFFENSIVE**  
Japan’s “Centrifugal Offensive,” fought between December 1941 and March 1942, extended the empire throughout the South Pacific, with victories at Guam, Wake Island, the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies (including New Guinea), the Solomons, the Gilbert Islands, and Java. In Southeast Asia, the British lost Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya, and Myanmar; Thailand, officially neutral, was nonetheless occupied by as many as 150,000 Japanese soldiers. In four months, Japan had conquered nearly half of the Pacific.

Japan’s infamous attack on the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, brought the United States into the war on the side of the Allies, who seemed incapable of defending their Pacific territories. Finally, in May 1942, an American victory in the Coral Sea (southwest of the Solomons)

frustrated a Japanese landing attempt on New Guinea. Crucially, American forces managed to break Japanese codes, allowing them to prepare for an attack at Midway Island. The Battle of Midway in June 1942 was a turning point in the Pacific theater. Luck also played a role: the American dive-bomber planes arrived just as the Japanese were refueling, leaving their aircraft carriers nearly defenseless. In the end, one Japanese cruiser, four carriers, 322 aircraft, and more than 5,000 men were lost; America lost 147 planes and about 350 men.

**THE TURNING OF THE TIDE**  
Despite their many early, easy victories in the Centrifugal Offensive, the Japanese were stretched thinly across the Pacific; the losses at Midway proved devastating. Even so, retaking the Pacific required enormous Allied effort. America’s first offensive took place on Guadalcanal, an island in the Solomons (see page 259). Victory required nine months of deadly jungle fighting. Heavy losses were incurred in New Guinea, the Gilbert Islands, and the Philippines, but Allied troops slowly forced the Japanese to retreat. By spring 1945, Japan was no longer dominant in the Pacific, although it continued to hold territories in China and Southeast Asia; the Americans, meanwhile, were gearing up for an invasion of Japan itself.



Right: Map illustrating the Japanese Centrifugal Offensive in December 2001. Japan’s ultimate aim was to gain unchallenged supremacy in the western Pacific, capturing the vast natural resources of the Dutch East Indies and Malaya.



# WORLD WAR II: GUADALCANAL

In the dawn hours of August 6, 1942, the United States landed its first offensive force of the Pacific War on Guadalcanal, the largest of the Solomon Islands. Few Americans could pronounce the island's name, let alone locate it on a map, but it would soon be seared into the nation's collective memory as the location of its first hard-won victory in the war to retake territory claimed by the Empire of Japan.



*The Flying Tigers, led by David Hill, inflicted devastating losses on the Japanese air force.*

## MAROONED

The Japanese, who had little use for the island except as a point in their extended defense perimeter, landed on Guadalcanal in early June and started to construct an airstrip. America and Australia, however, viewed Guadalcanal as strategically crucial—an airstrip there threatened to disrupt communication and transport shipping lanes between the two allies.

The U.S. Marines who landed in August expected resistance from 5,000 dug-in Japanese. Instead, they found that the Japanese, completely surprised by the unexpected appearance of an invasion fleet, had fled. Thus, 10,000 marines secured the landing site without firing a single shot. To make matters worse for Japan, a rapid response from nearby aircraft met with disastrous defeat. At the naval Battle of Savo Island (August 8–9), however, the Americans and their Australian allies lost badly, losing four heavy cruisers along with several other

warships and forcing the transport ships, carrying most of the marines' gear, to retreat. The marines on Guadalcanal were effectively marooned, surrounded by enemy seas and left with less than one month's supply of food and limited ammunition. They dug in, and, with a single bulldozer, they struggled to complete the abandoned airstrip while surviving daily airplane bombings.

## STARVATION ISLAND

By late August, the Battle of Guadalcanal had begun in earnest, with Americans and Japanese fighting on land, sea, and air. Unwilling or unable to adopt tactics other than full frontal assaults, the Japanese lost thousands in poorly conceived frontal attacks and—having planned for a rapid victory—provided so little food that their troops began calling Guadalcanal “Starvation Island.” Nevertheless, the “Tokyo Express” continued to land reinforcements. While the marines clung to the island and the all-important airfield with blood, sweat, and bullets, Australian-American naval victories at Eastern Solomons and Cape Esperance and a land victory at Port Moresby on New Guinea slowly pried the Solomons from Japan's grip. Finally, after losing some 20,000 men, Japan evacuated the island. The battle for Guadalcanal ended when the last Japanese troops departed on February 8, 1943. American ground losses numbered 2,500. In addition, 5,000 American and 10,000 Japanese sailors died; America lost 25 warships and 615 warplanes to Japan's 24 ships and 680 planes. The astonishingly rapid Japanese advance had been halted.

## Secret Codes and Secret Code Talkers

American cryptographers provided a great strategic advantage soon after the United States entered the war. One unit, whose product was called MAGIC, decoded Japan's communications in 1941, enabling the United States to prepare for the crucial battle at Midway. The MAGIC unit also betrayed the weakness of Japan's positions before the landing on Guadalcanal. Having won so much territory so quickly, Japan now had too few troops available to maintain the security of its long defensive perimeter, and its intelligence also completely missed the buildup of the invasion force destined for Guadalcanal. In addition to possessing skill as brilliant decoders, it appears that the Americans also possessed the finest secret code ever devised—thanks to the ingenuity of a group of young American Indians, who developed the code based on their Navajo language. Simple, elegant, and utterly indecipherable—even to native Navajo speakers—the Navajo “code talkers” performed a largely unrecognized but crucial service in the Pacific Theater.



*Above: U.S. Marines use amphibian tractors to move toward the beach on Guadalcanal Island.*



*Above: November 1942, U.S. Marines during the Guadalcanal Campaign. The Allies overwhelmed the Japanese who had occupied the island since May 1942. In December 1942, the Japanese abandoned efforts to retake the island.*

*Below: A map of Guadalcanal, in the southern Solomon Islands. The Guadalcanal Campaign, codenamed Watchtower, represented the transition by the Allies from defensive operations to offensive campaigns in the Solomon Islands, New Guinea, and the Central Pacific.*





# THE AGES OF TECHNOLOGY

Archaeologists rely on the three-age system to classify ancient societies according to their respective tool-making technologies. Although, the names of these divisions—Stone, Bronze, and Iron—are called “ages,” there is no consistent chronology for all of humankind, with different cultures reaching different levels independent of one another. The earliest, or least advanced, is the Stone Age, characterized by the inability to smelt any ore. Next is the Bronze Age, characterized by the use of copper and its bronze alloy. Iron Age implies the ability to manufacture weapons, tools, and other artifacts in any of the three types of hard material.

## THE STONE AGE

As early humankind expanded its limited experience and technology, it turned first to the materials immediately at hand. The hardest, most durable substance available was stone, and because of its strength and durability, stone had many practical applications as tools and as weapons. Constantly seeking improvement, early humans developed ways of shaping specific types of rock to meet the application for which the tool was intended.

In some parts of the world and at certain periods, this technology—known now as flintknapping—became highly advanced, and the blades were not only functional, but also beautifully constructed.

Stone is hard and when fractured correctly can be extremely sharp. But it is brittle—hours spent shaping a blade can be undone in an instant. Early blades were better suited to piercing soft tissue than withstanding any kind of impact.



Above: *The Iron Age is thought to have begun in approximately 1200 BC, and it was around 1,000 years later that Indian metalworkers learned how to combine iron with carbon to create an even better metal—steel. The first forged-steel helmets appeared in Europe in the tenth century. The sixteenth-century helmet shown here is of a type known as a burgeonet.*

Above: *An ancient stone spearhead discovered in Spain that is thought to have been sculpted at least 200,000 years ago. The Stone Age period is believed to have lasted for over three million years, ending around 4000 BC to 2000 BC with the advent of metalworking.*



Right: *Reconstruction of the small copper ax found with Otzi the Iceman, a mummified human from 3300 BC. Otzi's remains were discovered in September 1991 in the Otztal Alps on the border between Austria and Italy. Other items found with the body were a flint-bladed knife with a wooden handle and arrows tipped with flint.*



## THE BRONZE AGE

There were better solutions, and so humans developed the ability to smelt copper. Thus began the transition from stone to metal. Ötzi the Iceman, the well-preserved natural mummy discovered in the Alps and dating from about 3300 BC, was found with a small copper ax. Copper is soft as a metal, but it is resilient and can be reshaped after deformation. It can also be sharpened to a fine edge more easily than the blade of a stone knife can be touched up and made sharp again.

Mixing copper with tin sparked a new age of technology: bronze is much harder than copper alone and allowed for real technological advancement of many kinds. Bronze was strong enough to allow the development not just of superior pointed weapons, but also of the beloved archetypal weapon, the sword. Bronze was used from China, throughout India, to the Hellenic and Latin cultures of the West. Chisels, knives, brackets, nails, braces, gears, scythes, plows, and other mechanisms of this alloy allowed for greater production, larger cities, and more powerful armies. Bronze was used not only for the production of offensive weapons, such as spears and swords, but also for the production of defensive weapons, such as shield bosses, helmets, and body armor.

## THE IRON AGE

Ever seeking improvement, humankind would find an ore that was even more valuable: iron. Far harder and stronger than bronze, iron was difficult and expensive to produce in quantity because of the high temperatures necessary to make it workable. Iron has a much higher melting point than bronze, so new processes of metallurgy and forging developed to make working with this new metal possible. As time progressed, the child of iron, steel, was discovered when carbon mixed with the ore. Steel allowed for even better and more reliable tools and weapons, and is the backbone on which our modern society was built. Working with metal—bronze or iron—was such a revered skill and so shrouded in the mystery of heat and fire that smiths in many cultures across the world are regarded as semidivine and many figure prominently in supernatural tales.

*Below: Stonehenge—a prehistoric monument and World Heritage Site in Wiltshire, England, is believed to have been constructed around 3000 BC. Historians can only speculate as to how the monument was constructed and what its purpose was, but it is thought to have been used as a burial site and has long been studied for its possible connections with ancient astronomy.*





# HAN INVASION OF NAM VIET

In 221 BC, Qin Shi Huangdi united China and formed the Qin dynasty. Harsh and brutal in his practices, the Qin Emperor was able to accomplish tremendous advancements in a short amount of time, standardizing roads and currencies across the empire. But his repressive policies made him an unpopular ruler, and in 206 BC, Liu Bang overthrew the short-lived Qin Empire and established the Han Dynasty. The Han would last for more than 400 years.

## FREEDOM FIGHTERS

The Han built on a unified China to expand their territorial holdings substantially. With a centralized government and powerful army, Han Dynasty China was a serious force to be reckoned with. In 111 BC, the Han invaded the kingdom of Nam Viet to the south, home of present day Vietnam. The kingdom had previously existed independently since its inception, developing out of a number of tribes that were unified in 257 BC. The civilization of this region showed advanced skill in bronze work.

In 111 BC, the Han invade Nam Viet, and conquered the dominion. The conquest marked the beginning of more than a thousand years of Chinese control of the region and peoples. Although several movements for independence were made during the course of the next millennium—with varying success—these were short-lived at best. Among the most famous, however, was an early revolt by two sisters, known as the Trung Sisters.

In the late 30s in the first century AD, Thi Sach, Lord of Chau Dien in northern Vietnam, revolted against the Chinese. He was killed, and his death was meant to serve as an example to other rebels of what would happen if they were to oppose the Chinese. Thi Sach's widow, Trung Trac, was from a military family and was not afraid to rise up in arms herself. In the wake of her husband's death, she and her sister Trung Nhi lead the movement against the Chinese, swiftly assembling forces and reclaiming roughly sixty-five citadels in

the north of the country. Upon recapturing the land for the Vietnamese, she proclaimed herself queen along with her sister.

## LEGENDS FOREVER

The defeat, particularly one engineered by women, did not sit well with the Chinese, and they soon launched a force to reclaim the lands lost through the Trung Sisters' revolt. In AD 43 the Han lead an army against the sisters. The Vietnamese forces were small, untrained, and underprepared to fight against the Han. They were swiftly and resoundingly defeated several times as they retreated. Rather than facing the shame of inevitable defeat, the Trung Sisters committed suicide in AD 43 by drowning themselves in the Song Hat River.

Regarded as national heroes even today, the Trung Sisters are often portrayed riding elephants into battle against the Han Chinese. A district in Hanoi bears their name and a holiday in February is celebrated every year to commemorate their deaths. They are regarded nationally as important symbols of Vietnamese independence and freedom, as well as symbols of female strength and power in Vietnamese society.



Above: The New City of Feng. *Liu Bang, the founder of the Han Dynasty, was born in the original city of Feng. To please his father, he redesigned a section of the new Han capital at Chang An to resemble the place of his birth. This painting commemorates the construction of "the new city."*

Below: Created by the artist Zhao Boju in the 12th century, this silk handscroll depicts the triumphant entry of Liu Bang into Guanzhong, nearly one thousand years earlier.





# NGO QUYEN: NAM VIET INDEPENDENCE

Despite various attempts to throw off Chinese rule, Vietnam remained under Chinese control for more than a thousand years. In around AD 40, the Trung Sisters had managed to establish Vietnamese independence for a brief period of three years; in the middle of the third century, Lady Trieu led another successful rebellion against the Chinese. Yet it was not until AD 939 that Nam Viet would be able to establish meaningful independence.

## A TIME TO REBEL

Ngo Quyen was the son of a government official who became the prefect of Giao Chau. In 931 he joined the military and quickly rose through the ranks. When the military commander was killed in a revolt in 938, Ngo Quyen took control of the army. A brilliant strategist, Ngo Quyen foresaw what would happen in the wake of the rebellion. The Chinese would take the opportunity to send an army for the purpose of quelling the rebellion, but for the real objective of asserting control over the territory. At this point, China was in a period of transition. The Tang Dynasty, which had long been in decline, effectively ended in the early tenth century and was succeeded by other, short-lived regimes. The hand that controlled Annam (as Vietnam was called at the time) was weak.

## THE JAWS OF STRATEGY

Not only did Ngo Quyen foresee the intentions of the Chinese in sending their army to pacify the rebellion, he also predicted how they would mount their attack. Suspecting that they would sail down the Bach Dang River to be able to disembark in the center of what is now northern Vietnam, he employed an ingenious deception by commanding that sharpened spikes tipped with iron to be buried in the mouth of the river just beneath the surface of the water. Out of sight, these spikes were just deep enough to allow some of Ngo Quyen's lightweight craft with shallow drafts to pass above them during high tide. The Vietnamese were thus able to lure the Chinese downstream in pursuit. The larger, heavy Chinese boats, with much deeper drafts, drove against the spikes and were damaged and trapped.

Ngo Quyen and his forces had cornered the Chinese in the center of the river, where they burned many of the ships, and exercised their tremendous strategic advantage to crush the Chinese forces. This battle, known as the Battle of Bach Dang River, established lasting Vietnamese independence for the first time in a millennium.

Ngo Quyen went on to lead the new kingdom, Nam Viet, with his sovereignty recognized by the Chinese in 939. The Ngo Dynasty was not fated to last long, however. In 944, Ngo Quyen died, and a brief power struggle ensued in which his sons lost control of the throne, only to regain it a short time later. The Dynasty ended in 954, and a number of short-reigning kings followed in succession. The independence of the country had been won, but stability and unity were not yet within its grasp.



Above: The Han Empire was divided into areas known as commanderies directly ruled by the central government and an ever-increasing number of semiautonomous entities. The 36 commanderies established by Qin Shi Huang had expanded to eighty-three by the year AD 2.

Left: The Trung Sisters are hailed as national heroes in Vietnam for establishing independence from China, albeit for only three years. They are typically portrayed riding rampant war elephants toward the fleeing Chinese troops.



Above: The Terracotta Army of Emperor Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China, is one of the greatest archaeological finds of modern times. The figures vary in height according to their status—the tallest being the generals. Archeologists estimate that there are over 8,000 soldiers, 130 chariots with 520 horses and 150 cavalry horses, all designed to accompany the emperor into the afterlife.



# MONGOL INVASIONS OF VIETNAM

In the thirteenth century, the Mongols reached the height of their power. Conquering and dominating an empire roughly the size of Africa, the Mongols did not hesitate when it came to expansion. Yet despite their overwhelming strength and military savvy, the Mongols encountered a staunch opponent in the hot and muggy lands of modern-day Vietnam.



*A hand-colored map depicting the vast Mongol empire in the 13th and 14th centuries. The period corresponds to the Chinese Ming dynasty.*

## MARSHY OBSTINANCE

The Mongols launched three invasions of Dai Viet (modern-day Vietnam) during the twelfth century, only the first of which was successful. The subsequent two were disastrous. Although Dai Viet ultimately submitted itself to the overlordship of the Mongol Empire and paid tribute, the armies of Nam Viet were successful in defeating the Mongols and preserving their homeland. The subsequent submission and payments of tribute were a necessary step to avoid further conflict and bloodshed. Had Dai Viet continued to defy the power of the Mongols, the cost of resistance would have drained the country of both material and human resources.

In 1257, the Mongols launched the first invasion of Dai Viet. Kublai Khan was planning a large attack on Song Dynasty China, and wanted to use the lands of Dai Viet as an entry point. He sent emissaries to Dai Viet to request access to the lands for launching this attack. The emissaries, however, were killed, infuriating the Mongols. Kublai then sent an army under the direction of Uriyankhadai against Dai Viet, sacking the capital of Thang Long. The Mongol force was swift, and the Vietnamese could not stand against it in defense of their capital, modern-day Hanoi. King Tran Thai Tong made Dai Viet a tributary of the Mongol Empire. The Mongols, unaccustomed to the heat and humidity of these southern lands, were eager to be on their way.

For roughly thirty years, relations between the Mongols and the Vietnamese were peaceable. But in 1284, the Mongols, seeking once again a route to dominion elsewhere, met with opposition in Dai Viet. Attempting to conquer the kingdom of Cham, Kublai sent armies through Dai Viet, but they were opposed by Tran Hung Dao. The Mongols had believed the

peoples of Dai Viet to be loyal vassals, since they paid tribute. Ill prepared for the resistance they met, the Mongol's invasion proved disastrous, and Tran Hung Dao defeated the Mongol horsemen with the aid of searing weather and marshy ground.

## HISTORY REPEATING

In response to this defeat, the Mongols launched another invasion in 1287, this time on a massive scale. It was clear the Mongols didn't believe in history repeating itself, but this conflict should have given them plenty of evidence. General Tran Hung Dao used a tactic identical to the one that had defeated the Chinese and established Vietnamese independence more than three centuries earlier. He buried sharpened stakes in the Bach Dang River and tipped them with iron points. The tips of these were low enough to allow shallow-draft vessels to pass over them unscathed at high tide. Using just such craft, Tran Hung Dao lured the Mongol fleet into the spikes. The ships were either sunk by the damage, or trapped and later burned with flaming arrows. Many of the Mongol army died, or were easy pickings for the archers and soldiers on the banks. This battle, like its predecessor, is known as the Battle of Back Dang. Brilliant military strategists on land, the Mongols were ill prepared for the challenges they met upon water against the armies of Dai Viet.

Despite the Vietnamese victory, Dai Viet once again submitted as a tributary to the Mongol Empire.



*Above: Statue of Tran Hung Dao, Supreme Commander of Dai Viet, Vung Tau City, Vietnam. His multiple victories over the Mongol forces of the mighty Kublai Khan are considered to be among the greatest military successes of all time.*



*Left: Naval warfare has played a vital role throughout Vietnamese history, with most decisive battles being fought by their formidable seaborne forces.*



# MING INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF DAI VIET

Weakened by its defense against the Mongol invasions of the late thirteenth century, as well as by its efforts to subjugate and control the neighboring kingdom of Champa, Dai Viet was in a vulnerable position at the end of the fourteenth century. In 1400, the Tran Dynasty collapsed. Taking advantage of the weakness of Dai Viet, Ming Dynasty China launched a campaign to retake control of the country.

## DETHRONER, DETHRONED IN TURN

For nearly 500 years, Dai Viet had existed as an independent state since throwing off the yoke of Chinese domination in the tenth century. The Chinese, however, had long memories, and had not forgotten that Dai Viet had been part of its empire for about a thousand years prior to its gaining independence.

In 1400, Ho Quy Ly usurped the throne of Dai Viet and renamed the country Dai Ngu. Killing the Tran king, Ho Quy Ly instantly initiated a number of radical reforms, many of which made him unpopular with the local population. In 1402 he abdicated the throne to his son, Ho Han Thuong. While he attempted to establish a relationship with Ming Dynasty China, the Ming launched their campaign in 1406 under the pretext of reinstating the Tran Dynasty that had been deposed.

The Ming swiftly led a force of some 80,000 southward into Vietnam and quickly captured the city of present-day Hanoi. Ho was soundly defeated in a number of confrontations, and the Ming assumed complete administrative control of the entire country.

The Ming provided an outstanding example of how to earn the contempt of a conquered people. Destroying icons of local culture, such as Vietnamese texts, artifacts, and temples, the Ming sought to impose Chinese culture and learning on the local population. Chinese Confucian thought, texts such as the I-Ching, Chinese dress, and many other cultural practices were brought into the region and enforced, often violently. The Chinese also developed a conscription system to force

Vietnamese to serve in the Chinese military. The population of Vietnam was incapable of organizing a meaningful resistance for several years, but a revolt was inevitable. Efforts to throw off Chinese oppression, however, began almost immediately.

## GUNPOWDER

Instrumental in the wars between the Ho and the Ming were firearms and explosives. While many assume that the technology of gunpowder traveled from the Chinese to the Vietnamese, some evidence suggests an opposite direction of transmission. The evidence is scant, however, and there is little to substantiate such an argument. Gunpowder appears to have developed out of chemical compounds produced by doctors and Taoist alchemists, experimenting with different substances for medicinal and alchemical purposes. Fire and flammable substances had been in use for military purposes for centuries, and when gunpowder was developed—probably in the ninth century AD—it was soon adapted to military purposes as an explosive and as a propellant for rockets. The Chinese used gunpowder in their defense against the Mongol invasions, and by the time of the Ming invasion of Dai Viet in 1407, Chinese forces had more advanced rifles, cannon, and other firearms.



*Hollow pottery caltrops were filled with gunpowder to make formidable weapons against enemy cavalry. Spiked caltrops had long been used to maim horses but the addition of gunpowder added a whole new dimension of potency.*



Above: In 1407, under the pretext of helping to restore the Tran Dynasty, Ming troops invaded Dai Ngu. The Ho dynasty came to an end after only seven years in power. The Ming occupying force annexed Dai Ngu into the Ming Empire after claiming that there was no heir to Tran throne.

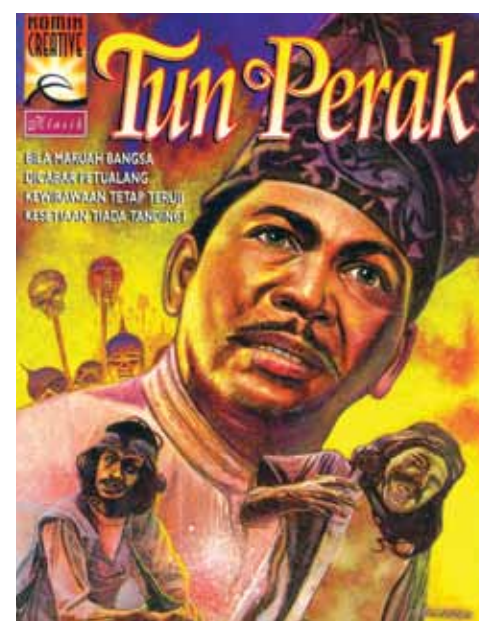


Above: Map of Vietnam showing the conquest of the south. Tran kings waged many wars against the southern kingdom of Champa, continuing the Viets' long history of southern expansion that had begun shortly after gaining independence from China. Ironically, it was partially the stiff resistance posed by Champa that drained the strength of the Dai Viet forces and encouraged the Chinese to invade once more.

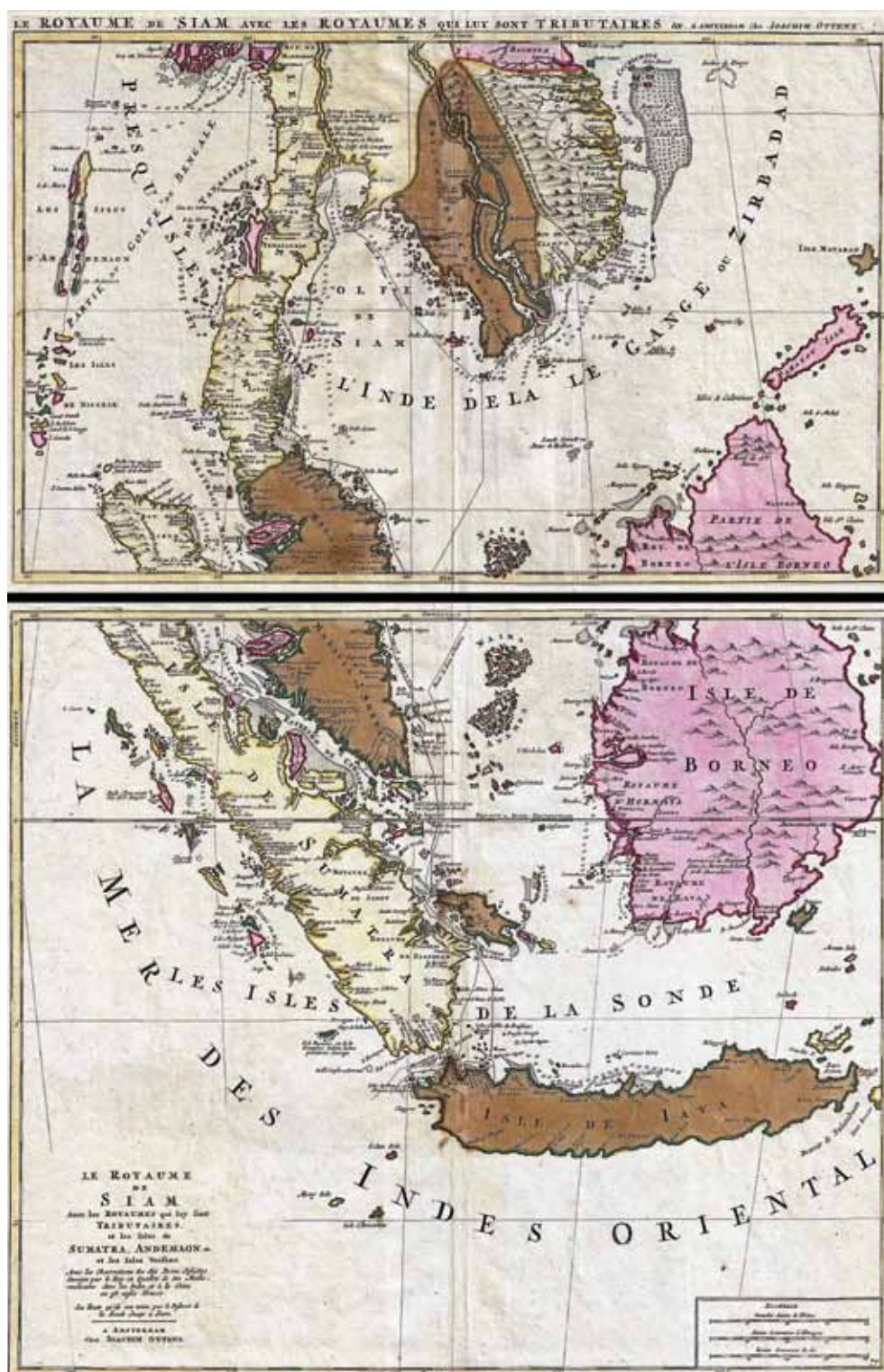


# SULTANATE OF MALACCA

Around the year 1400, Parameswara fled his kingdom on Singapura and headed north when the Srivijayan kingdoms came under attack by forces from Java. The new kingdom he founded was named after the melaka tree. According to legend, Paramaswara was resting beneath a oelaka tree when he saw a mouse deer—a small mammal similar in appearance to a muntjac—kick a pursuing dog and escape. So impressed was he that he took this incident as a sign and decided to build his new kingdom on the spot. While the veracity of the story is dubious, these founding legends invariably become important and integral parts of the regional culture. The melaka tree in this tale is a type of gooseberry tree whose berries were used in traditional Indian medicine and whose fruit is still widely consumed today.



Above: In 1445 Tun Perak led the Malaccan army to victory against the Siamese invaders. He was made a bendahara in the following year. He prevented another Siamese invasion in 1456.



Above: A map of Siam and its tributaries.



Left: A mouse deer. An encounter with this diminutive creature inspired Paramaswara to build his new kingdom

## SUBSERVIENCE AND REVOLT

Malacca, which was originally inhabited by Hindus and Buddhists, is strategically situated on the trade routes between China, India, and the rest of Southeast Asia. Malacca became an important center of trade and therefore a place of cultural interaction and sharing. In 1414, Parameswara converted to Islam. He was a shrewd leader and knew the limitations of his country—fearing attacks from Java and from the Thai kingdom of Ayutthaya, Parameswara negotiated favorable terms with Ming Dynasty China for establishing Malacca as a tributary under the protection of the Ming. Malacca could now manage regional trade and expand its cities without having to worry about attack from its neighbors.

Malaccan relations continued more or less peaceably until the middle of the fifteenth century. At that time, Sultan Muzaffar Shah refused to pay the customary tribute due to the Ayutthaya kingdom to the north. In 1445, Ayutthaya sent a Siamese force against the Sultanate of Malacca, but the Malaccans were able to repel the attack. The Siamese returned again in 1456, but once again the Malaccans beat them off and secured their independence and safety. The Malaccan success was largely achieved with the leadership of a man named Tun Perak, who would go on to become a famous warrior. In 1456 he was named *bendahara*, or chief minister, and used his position to increase the power and territorial holdings of the sultanate.

## A BLOOMING FLOWER CUT

Tun Perak expanded the territorial dominion of Malacca to include the whole southern half of the Malay Peninsula as well as land along the eastern coast of Sumatra. He was respected widely, and the three sultans who succeeded Muzaffar were all related to Tun Perak by blood. Their positions were also held secure in part through the power of his influence.

The Sultanate of Malacca flourished for just over a century, until it came under attack by the Portuguese, but in 1511, the kingdom fell. Although the Portuguese came initially just to establish trade, conflict seems to have arisen in part over the Christian religion of the Portuguese. When the sultan refused their demands, the conflict escalated and eventually resulted in a Portuguese victory.



# VIETNAM-CHAMPA WARS

Geographically, present-day Vietnam consists of a long coastal sliver extending southward from a larger territory in the north that extends inland. The northern region, however, is the home of the original kingdom of Nam Viet. The southern sliver traditionally belonged to another kingdom, called Champa, which was conquered by the Vietnamese in 1471.

## DWINDLING TERRITORY

The inhabitants of Champa, the Cham, spoke an Austronesian language from a different linguistic family than Khmer—an Australasian language that was spoken by their neighbors to the east in Cambodia—and also different from Vietnamese—spoken by their neighbors to the north. The Cham were, and still are, an ethnically and linguistically distinct population in Southeast Asia. In the struggles for domination of the peninsula, Champa had previously enjoyed success as a military power, and the Champa Kingdom at times included parts of modern Vietnam and Laos. In 1178, the Cham invaded the Khmer Kingdom to the west. Despite the initial success of their campaigns, they were defeated and driven from the land by the man would become the Khmer king, Jayavarman VII, and would go on to dedicate the famous temple of Ta Prom to his mother.

As a coastal state, the Cham had a strong navy, with expertly crafted ships and a command of waterways both at sea and in the river systems. Their attack on the Khmer in 1178 was via the Mekong River.

By 1471, the Vietnamese had already begun making some incursions into Cham territory, which was reported to the Chinese, to whom both nations paid tribute. But the Chinese took no action against the Vietnamese, and the Vietnamese led a massive invasion into Champa in 1471 under the direction of Le Thanh Tong, the emperor of Annam (as Vietnam was known to the Chinese). Raising an army several times the size of any Champa would be able to muster, the Vietnamese expedition was

incredibly costly, but designed to be swift and effective. It was likewise brutal, and the Cham would report to the Chinese the slaughter of tens of thousands of inhabitants of its capital, Vijaya. Owing to previous invasions by Champa, as well as to the fact that Champa had converted to Islam, the neighboring state of Angkor did not lend any aid to Champa to repel the invasions.

## AGGRESSION AND EXPANSION

This was a period of great aggression on the part of the Vietnamese. After conquering Vijaya and subduing Champa, the Vietnamese forced cultural integration on the Cham, much as the Chinese had done to the Vietnamese previously. While the Vietnamese had eventually been able to throw off Chinese oppression, however, the Cham were not able to do so. Furthermore, at this time, reports came back to the Chinese of attacks by Vietnamese on merchant ships from Malacca. An Islamic sultanate established in 1470, Malacca was a Chinese protectorate. Battle continued until all regions of Champa were incorporated into Vietnam, and the map of the country in the seventeenth century began to look much like its present-day form.



Above: A bas-relief depiction of a naval battle at the Bayon, Angkor, showing Cham soldiers in the boat and defeated Khmer warriors floundering in the water.

Below: Early Western map of Tonkin (1651). One of the earliest Western maps showing details of northern and central Vietnam.





# KINGDOM OF FUNAN

Funan is the name of a large Khmer civilization that developed in Southeast Asia during the first century AD. Based in the area around the Mekong River Delta of modern Vietnam, the kingdom encompassed much of southern Indo-China and the Malaysian Peninsula. Little is known about Funan because there was no writing system native to the local population. Historians must rely on archaeological evidence, as well as textual evidence from Chinese, and later Funanese and Indian texts.



*Illustration of a Chenla horse and elephant cavalry, as it campaigned against Funan.*

## UNKNOWN ROOTS

Given the lack of textual evidence, there are a number of uncertainties regarding the Kingdom of Funan and its inhabitants. Even the name “Funan” is of Chinese origin; while it may be a sinicization of *pnom*, meaning mountain, the actual origin of the name *Funan* is unknown, as is the original name of the kingdom as it would have been called by its local inhabitants. Evidence of settlement of the Mekong Delta goes back several centuries before the supposed beginning of the Funan State. But it is unclear whether Funan was initially a unified or centralized state, or if it was more a collection of smaller polities that all collaborated economically and were allied militarily.

The original founder of the Kingdom of Funan is also a matter of some conjecture. The seventh-century Chinese text, *The Book of Liang*, suggests that Funan was founded by a man named Huntian, who came from some foreign land and who united and ruled over the peoples of southern Vietnam and Cambodia. Some scholars view *Huntian* as a Chinese transcription of the Indian Brahmin Kaundinya, who is mentioned on a Funanese stele found at My Son. Without additional textual evidence, however, it is impossible to tell if there was a single founder of the kingdom and who that founder could have been.

With regard to the people of Funan, it is furthermore unclear whether they were linguistically and ethnically homogeneous. They were most likely Khmer, but may have been Austronesian as the indigenous peoples of Taiwan were. The kingdom was heavily Indianized and by the fifth century it appears that the ruling elite practiced Indian customs and used the Sanskrit language widely. A script based on the Sanskrit Devanagari was developed for local use.

sustenance, wealth, and power.

The Funanese paid tribute to China and conducted trade with their northern neighbors. There appear to have been a few conflicts with China over southern territories, such as a series of struggles in the 270s between Funan and Linyi on one side, and China on the other over the territory around Tongkin in present-day Vietnam. Chenla, which conquered Funan in the sixth century, was a Khmer kingdom and the ancestor of modern-day Cambodia.

*Below: This stele—an inscribed stone slab—is one of the very few documents dating back to the Kingdom of Funan. The inscription tells a story relating to the Hindu deity Vishnu.*

*Below: Map showing the extent of Funan before it was conquered by Chenla in the sixth century.*



## THE LONG ARM OF TRADE

Based mostly around the southern coast of Indo-China and along the Malaysian Peninsula, traffic using the various waterways was essential to the economy of Funan. The country's wealth depended upon a combination of trade and rice cultivation. Artifacts from as far away as Rome have been found in the region. It seems that the Funanese employed irrigation systems to increase their rice production and wealth. This set a precedent for water management in the region. The later kingdom of Angkor relied heavily on intricate systems of canals and irrigation for its

*Right: Victory Gate, Angkor. Thom Angkor Thom, or “Great City,” is located in present-day Cambodia, and was the last and most enduring capital city of the Khmer empire. The Victory Gate was built in the 12th century, when Jayavarman VII was king.*





# THE KINGDOM OF PAGAN

The Kingdom of Pagan, or the Pagan Empire, was the first unified Burmese empire. While Tibeto-Burman peoples had inhabited the lands of Myanmar for hundreds, if not thousands of years, the first clear unification of such peoples began in the second half of the eleventh century AD with Pagan, one of several city-states in the region of the Pyu people. The city was founded in the mid-ninth century and under the kings of Pagan, the whole region of the Irrawaddy River valley was unified into a single polity.

## PAGAN WATERS

Like their neighbors to the east, the Khmer, the kings of Pagan increased their kingdom through intelligent design of canals and irrigation systems to boost rice production and ensure year-round supplies of water. The climate in the region supplied significant rain during part of the year, but no rain at all during other times. Shrewd water management allowed for water to be collected, stored, and channeled as necessary, meaning uninterrupted and increased production of crops.

The peoples of Pagan appear to have settled the area after migrating from the nearby kingdom of Nan Zhao in what is now southern China. In the mid-ninth century, they built the fortified city of Pagan on the banks of the Irrawaddy River. This walled city was constructed of red brick and would have contained administrative and religious buildings and temples. The modern city of Pagan is built on top of the ruins of the old walled city. Under the direction of King Anawrahta, Pagan was able to bring together the states to the north and south, such as Tagaung in the north and Sri Ksetra in the south, which became part of the Pagan Empire in the 1050s. Anawrahta rose to the throne of Pagan in 1044 and aggressively sought to unify and then strengthen the various powers in the region. He was extremely successful, ushering in a period of prosperity and relative peace that lasted roughly two centuries.

## THE TANKS OF ANCIENT WARFARE

The Pagan military drew influences from both India and China. The weaponry was typical for the time period: bows, spears, swords, and shields. A prominent feature of the Pagan army, however, was its division of war elephants. The use of elephants in Burma during the later Pagan Empire is described in Marco Polo's accounts of his travels.

In 1277 a small army of Mongols battled the war elephants of Pagan and were able to defeat them successfully. Despite not being able to use their horses, which were afraid of the elephants, the Mongols used their bows to aggravate the elephants so intensely from a distance that the beasts went into violent and angry fits and could not be controlled. Instead, the elephants ended up destroying the Pagan army itself. Six years later, the Mongols invaded in force and took Pagan. By this point the empire had grown weak, in large part because Buddhist temples and their extensive land holdings were exempt from tax, imposing a heavy burden on the coffers of the Pagan government. Under ineffectual leadership, the empire fell to the Mongols, and subsequently, into disorder.



*Anawrahta Minsaw (1014–1077) was the founder of the Pagan Empire and is hailed as the father of Myanmar. He turned a small principality into the first Burmese Empire that formed the basis of modern-day Myanmar. He ascended to the Pagan throne in 1044.*



Above: A prominent feature of the Pagan army was its company of war elephants.

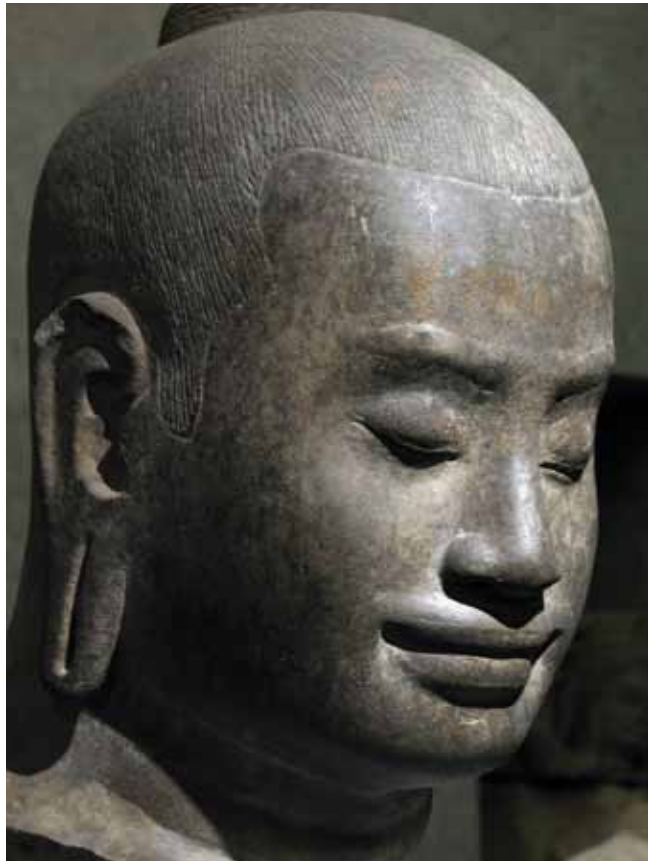


Above: The Kingdom of Pagan was the first kingdom to unify the regions that would later constitute modern-day Myanmar. Anawrahta placed peripheral regions such as Shan States and Arakan under Pagan's suzerainty. He successfully stopped the advance of the Khmer Empire, making Pagan one of two main kingdoms in mainland Southeast Asia.



# THE KINGDOM OF KHMER

In AD 802, a ruler named Jayavarman II declared himself to be the head of a new kingdom, Khmer, independent from Khmer's former rulers, the Sailendra dynasty of Java (Srivijaya, from Sumatra). From his base in the Kulen Hills, where the headwaters of the Puok and Siem Rivers were considered holy throughout the Khmer period, Jayavarman conquered the old kingdom of Chenla (roughly Cambodia) and founded several cities as he moved up the Mekong River. For the next six hundred years, Khmer would dominate Southeast Asia.



Above: Statue of Jayavarman VII, King of Khmer from 1181 to 1218. Jayavarman, whose name means "Great Warrior," rose to prominence when he led the Khmer army that ousted the Cham who had launched a surprise invasion in 1178, pillaging the capital.

## ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

The now-famous city of Angkor, first called Yasodharapura, was founded by King Yasovarman I (890–910) around 900, but was abandoned for some decades during the tenth century, when the Kingdom of Khmer was marred by warfare and divisive internal politics. Khmer fought many wars against its neighbors in the attempt to expand its borders, including the Pagan and Chola dynasties (ninth to thirteenth centuries) of southern India to the west, Dai Viet to the northeast, Annam to the north, and especially Champa to the east. The Khmer and the Cham, in particular, were enemies, going to war no fewer than four times between 1050 and 1203. Each kingdom sacked the other's capital several times: Khmer forces sacked Vijaya in 1145 and 1190; Cham forces returned the favor at Angkor in 1177, 1430, and 1444, after which the weakened Khmer kingdom slowly fell apart, and Angkor was abandoned.

Khmer's power stemmed from its masterful engineering projects, which regulated the water vital for Khmer's primary source of wealth: rice. Although less well known than the incredible stone temples built from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries, the irrigation systems of Angkor are no less of a marvel; they supported a city population of up to 750,000 and large armies of war elephants, infantrymen who bore shields of rhinoceros hide, and possibly martial artists. Without doubt, the irrigation engineers and architects were as responsible as the kings and generals for bringing Khmer to its glorious height.



Above: A map of the Khmer Empire. The red line shows the extent of the empire at its peak in the twelfth century when it took over much of the land that is now Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam.



Left: The spectacular Angkor Wat Temple is testament to the splendor of the Khmer kingdom. However, it was their remarkable irrigation system that brought the wealth that allowed the temple to be built.



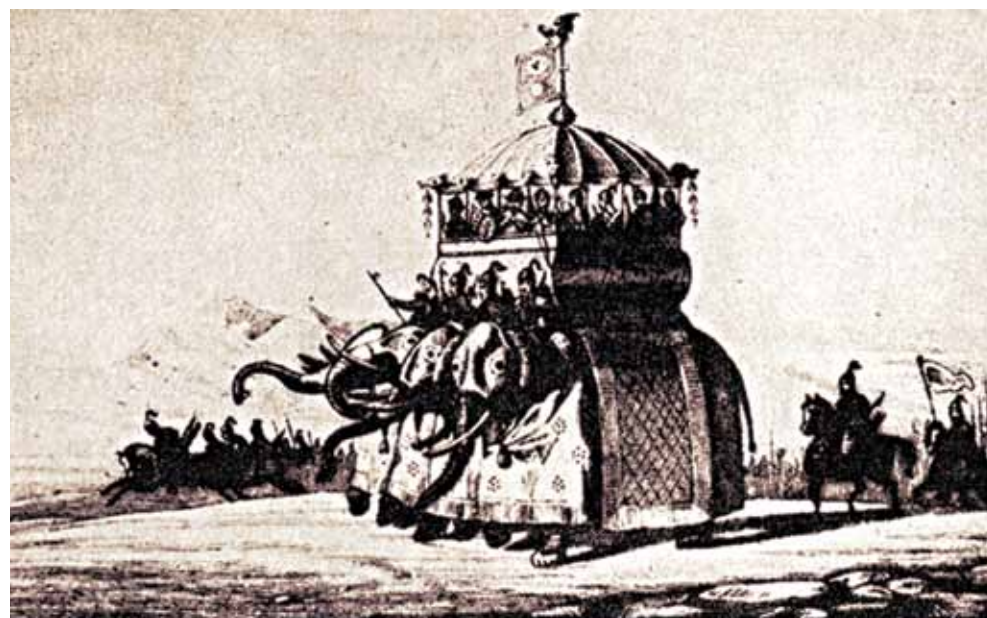
# MONGOL INVASION OF BURMA

In 1271, Mongol leader Kublai Khan tried to exact tribute from the Pagan Empire of Burma through the government of Yunnan. The Burmese refused, however, and in 1273, Kublai Khan sent some of his own ambassadors to demand submission and tribute from Pagan. The ambassadors were killed, however, inviting the wrath of the Mongols. With other, more pressing matters elsewhere, the Mongols did not respond immediately to this affront, and the Pagan king began crossing the northern borders of Pagan into Yunnan, which was now controlled by the Mongols. In 1277, the Mongols sent a force southward out of Yunnan to repel the invasion.

Right: *The royal palace at Ava (Innwa) in the 1820s, when Bagyidaw was king. Much of Ava was destroyed by an earthquake in 1838, including all but one watch tower of the palace.*



Below: *Although the Mongols were chiefly nomadic horsemen, Kublai Khan did employ elephants for hunting and in battle. Four elephants harnessed together would be used to carry a large platform from which archers could shoot from every angle.*



## TAX EXEMPTIONS

The Battle of Ngassaunggyan is the name attributed to the armed conflict between the Mongols and the Paganese under Narathihapate in 1277. The Mongols achieved a decided victory and the story of the battle includes how they overcame the war elephants of Pagan by driving them into a frenzy with shower after shower of arrows. The elephants not only broke formation, they panicked into stampedes that tore apart the Pagan army.

In 1283, the Mongols engaged Pagan in the second of the three battles that would result in the fall of the Pagan Empire. This time, the Mongols led a much larger and more organized force southward out of Yunnan, both by boat along the rivers, and on land. The Mongols engaged the army of Pagan near Bhamo, once again winning a decisive victory over its opponent. King Narathihapate could neither command his troops effectively, nor could he administer his government with authority and shrewdness.

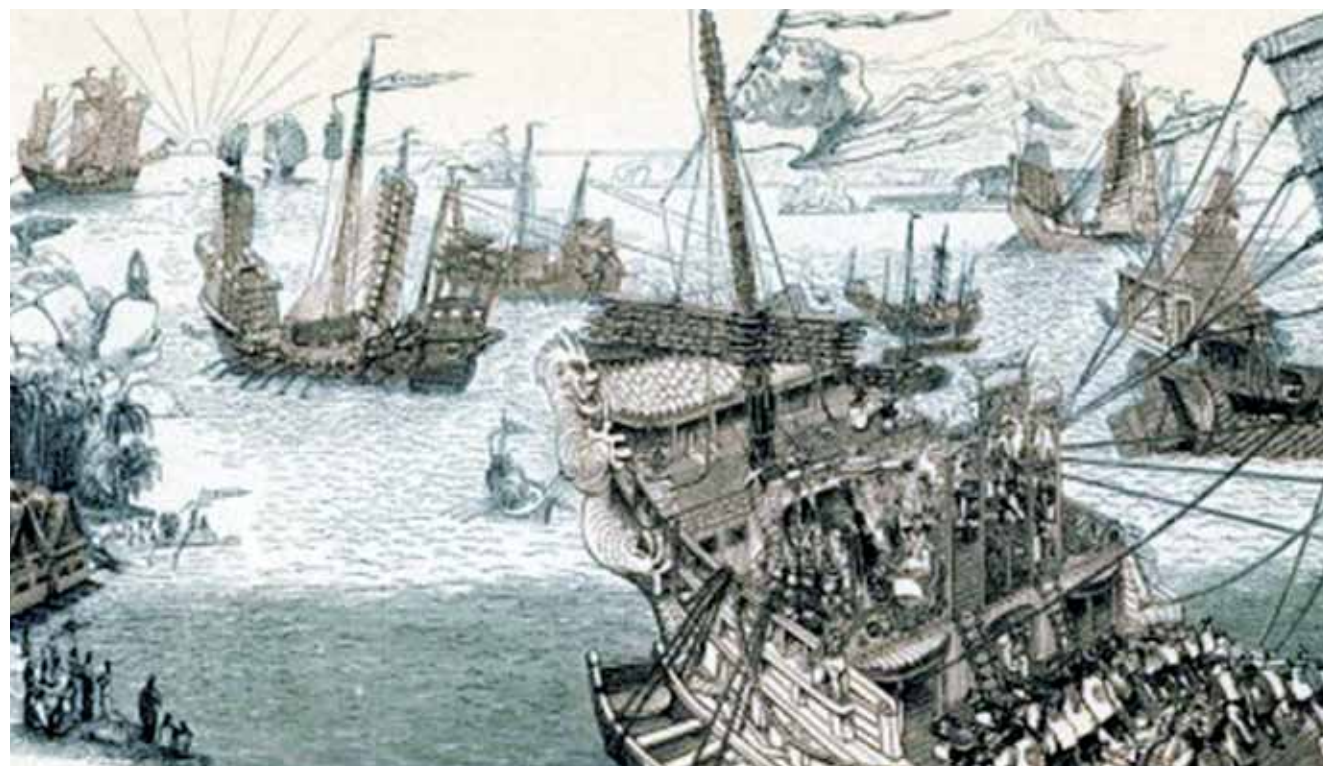
Control was crumbling in Pagan. The government was under significant financial strain in part because of tax policies that made all holdings of temples exempt from taxation. Over time, the temples of Burma had accumulated tremendous wealth and resources, but none of this could be taxed, further draining the government coffers and making it difficult for Pagan to fund governmental initiatives, including maintenance of defense.

## ENDING IN SHAME

After a series of smaller conflicts, the Mongols struck again in 1287. As the Mongols advanced toward Pagan, seizing the wealth of gold and silver from the temples and monasteries, Narathihapate left Pagan and fled to the southern lands. For his cowardly flight from the Mongols of Yunnan, he was poisoned by his own son in 1287, and the country subsequently broke apart. It is disputed whether the Mongols actually reached Pagan, but their victory can be described as nothing short of complete and decisive.

These battles and events are partially related in *Il Milione*, the account of Marco Polo's adventures in Asia. Marco Polo,

who apparently knew and served Kublai Khan, would have been acquainted with the Mongol leader during this critical time period. Recently, however, scholars have doubted whether Marco Polo himself actually went to China, or whether the narratives of his voyages are actually the collections of hearsay of other travelers.



Left: *The Mongol fleet. In 1283, the Mongols sent a huge force against the Pagans who had refused to pay him tribute a decade earlier.*



# SUKHOTHAI: RAMKANGHAENG

In the mid-thirteenth century, two brothers took control of the city of Sukhothai in the north of modern-day Thailand. Sukhothai is considered the first Thai state. Previously under the control of the Khmer Empire to the south and east, Sukhothai was originally a small kingdom that quickly grew into a large and strong political state.

## FOUNDERS OF THAILAND

Two brothers, Po Khun Bang Klang Hao and Po Khun Pha Muang, took control of Sukhothai from the Mons of Lavo in the mid-thirteenth century. Bang Klang Hao is said to have defeated the Khmer governor of Sukhothai in single combat, and thereby wrested control of the territory from the Khmer Empire. Bang Klang Hao became Sukhothai's first king, ruling under the title Sri Indraditya.

After Sri Indraditya, the kingdom of Sukhothai passed to his first son, Ban Muang, who died around the year 1279. The kingdom then passed to his younger brother, Ramkhamhaeng, who is vital to modern Thai nationality and is considered the father of the Thai kingdom.

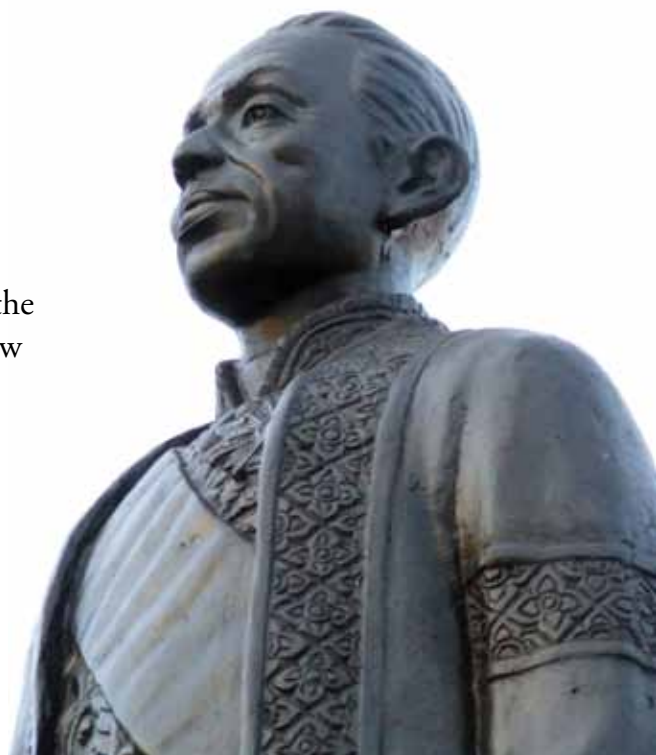
Ramkhamhaeng was an intelligent and strong leader who expanded the dominion of Sukhothai far beyond its original holdings in the north. Through military campaigns and strategic diplomacy, Ramkhamhaeng was able to acquire lands as far west as the Burmese coast along the Indian Ocean and far south along the Malay Peninsula. Many lands paid him tribute, and through the subjugation of Tambralinga, Sukhothai adopted Theravada Buddhism as its principle religion.

## DOUBTFUL RECORDS

Much of what we seem to know about Ramkhamhaeng comes from a single inscription on a stone stele, which was serendipitously discovered by King Mongkut in the nineteenth century. The stele describes Ramkhamhaeng as a glorious ruler and his reign as a period of prosperity for his people. He is credited with spreading Theravada Buddhism and also for developing the Thai writing system. The artistic achievements of Sukhothai are also notable, in terms of both temple construction and sculpture. The authenticity of this particular stele, however,

is widely disputed because it may have been fabricated to provide a basis for Thai national pride and identity. While the debate continues, there is little certainty about the details of Ramkhamhaeng's life or rule, nor is there enough evidence about the exact nature of the control he held over his territories, whether it was direct administration or control through payment of tribute.

Sukhothai formed an alliance with Yuan Dynasty China to avoid Mongol invasion, which, considering the fate of Sukhothai's neighbors, was a wise move. The kingdom furthermore appears to have borrowed certain ceramic techniques from China during this period. After Ramkhamhaeng's death at the end of the thirteenth century, the unity of Sukhothai began to crumble, and the dominion shrank once again. The tide of power began to shift, and a new kingdom emerged dominant on the peninsula: Ayutthaya, which would eventually take control not only of Sukhothai, but also of most of Indo-China. While Sukhothai is viewed as the first Thai state, Ayutthaya would lay the foundation for the modern Kingdom of Thailand.



Above: *King Monburi (1804–1868) was the fourth king of Siam and one of its most revered monarchs, initiating the modernization of Siam, both in technology and culture.*

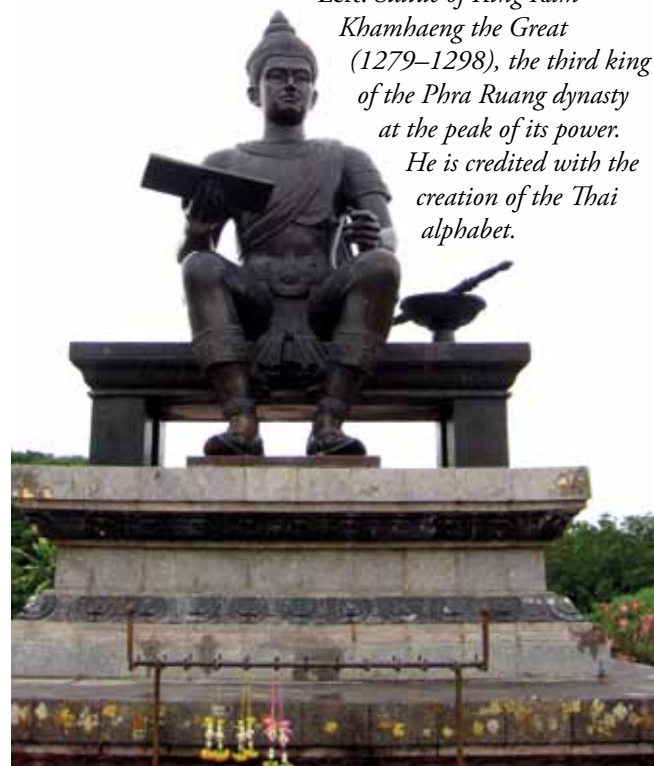


Right: *Khun Bang Klang Hao (1238–1270) was the first king of Sukhothai, giving rise to the first Thai dynasty of Phra Ruang.*

Below: *The temple ruins in the capital of the Sukhothai kingdom in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in what is now northern Thailand.*



Left: *Statue of King Ram Khamhaeng the Great (1279–1298), the third king of the Phra Ruang dynasty at the peak of its power. He is credited with the creation of the Thai alphabet.*





# THE KINGDOM OF AYUTTHAYA

In much in the same way that Sukhothai began as an independent city-state and gradually grew into a large kingdom covering a sizeable expanse of land and controlling smaller tributaries, the Kingdom of Ayutthaya started small but quickly rose to become the dominant power in Indochina, succeeding Sukhothai and forming the basis for the modern Kingdom of Thailand.



Above: *Memorial to Queen Suriyothai. The Burmese-Siamese war of 1548 is famed in Thai history for the death of Queen Suriyothai. The Queen followed her husband to war disguised as a man and sacrificed her life to save him when his elephant was killed.*

## GOVERNING BY MANDALA

Ayutthaya, originally based to the south of Sukhothai and slightly to the north of what is now Bangkok, fought extensively against the Khmer kingdom to their east. The Khmer Empire was in decline, and in 1431 Ayutthaya sacked the Khmer capital of Angkor, successfully defeating its defenders. This was a major victory, and not only meant the end of Khmer control of Angkor and the surrounding areas but also had an impact on the way Ayutthaya itself was run. In the wake of the victory over Angkor, Ayutthaya adopted numerous Khmer practices and beliefs, many of which were Hindu in origin. The Ayutthaya kings ruled according to a mandala system, in which they sat in the center of a series of circles. The outer circles consisted of more or less independent local rulers who owed their allegiance and loyalty to the Ayutthayan king as a kind of overlord.

This system of government allowed the Ayutthayans to control a huge territory in Indochina without a massive administrative burden, but it also created several problems of managing local uprisings and struggles for power, many of which were bloody. Ayutthaya had sovereignty over the whole region, but did not have administrative control over each principality within its domain.

Ayutthaya conquered Sukhothai in 1438 and pressed onward from there. Looking to the lands to the south, Ayutthaya saw the important trade connections of the Sultanate of Malacca. Malacca was, however, a protectorate of Ming Dynasty China, and Ayutthaya did not have the strength to fight both Malacca and the Ming. The Chinese knew the economic importance of Malacca and were willing to provide necessary protection to insure this vital asset.

## GLORIOUS EXPANSION, SWIFT DECLINE

Ayutthaya itself, however, had significant coastal territory and engaged widely in trade. The kingdom traded not only with India, China, and the other nations of the region, but also

with the Portuguese, French, and British. Through trade with Europeans, the Ayutthaya strengthened their military with European firearms. Despite the technological advancement of their weaponry, Ayutthaya faced persistent pressure from Myanmar in the north, and the Burmese led several campaigns against Ayutthaya. Their pressure increased in the middle of the eighteenth century, and Myanmar eventually sacked the Ayutthaya capital in 1767, bringing an end to approximately 400 years of Ayutthayan history.

The city of Ayutthaya is home to the temple of Wat Phanan Choeng, which houses a massive statue of Buddha more than sixty feet tall. The statue is covered in solid gold—about 350 pounds of it. In 1767, Ayutthaya fell to invasions from Myanmar and much of the capital was burned or destroyed. However, the Wat Phanan Choeng and its magnificent statue survived the onslaught.

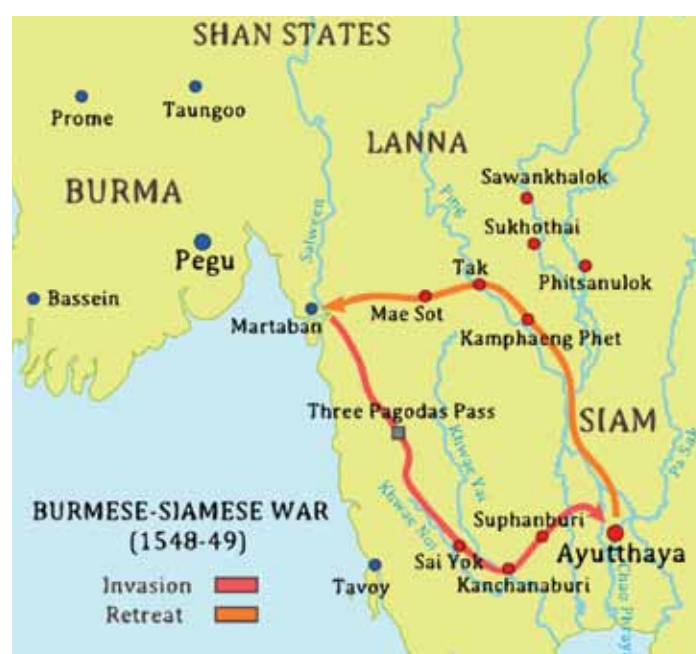
Right: *King Tabinshwehti of Pegu's invasion of Siam in 1548–1549. This was the first war fought between the Toungoo Dynasty of Burma and the Ayutthaya Kingdom of Siam and was notable for the introduction of early modern warfare into the region.*



Above: *Two Khmer sculptured heads in Angkor. Following their victory over the Khmer the Ayutthaya adopted many Khmer customs.*



Above: *The Ayutthaya kingdom was not a single, unified state but rather a network of self-governing principalities and tributary provinces owing allegiance to the king of Ayutthaya under the mandala system, whereby smaller nations exist in a tributary status to the Ayutthaya "overlords."*





# TOUNGGOO DYNASTY

The formally united Burma had been devolving into contending kingdoms ever since the Mongols captured Pagan in 1287, with the Mon people generally occupying the south, the Burmese the center, and the Shan the north and east. Multiple civil wars occurred among them, with no group gaining dominance until the sixteenth century.

## THE CROWN OF ALL BURMA

In 1510, King Minkyinyo declared his state of Tounggoo (a Burmese district-turned-kingdom with a capital by the same name) independent of its former ruling state of Ava. During his reign, from 1486 to 1531, the Shans, from the kingdom of Mohnyin, launched raids into Ava that soon became a full-scale invasion. In 1527, Mohnyin conquered Ava outright, killed its king, installed a puppet ruler, and devastated the country. Minkyinyo, although he welcomed Ava refugees, had sent no aid to Ava, being more concerned with the Mon rulers of Pegu.

Although the Tounggoo Dynasty is sometimes dated to Minkyinyo's reign, it is more accurate to call his son, Tabinshwehti, the dynasty's true founder. Tabinshwehti was only 16 when he succeeded his father, but he immediately set about consolidating and strengthening his kingdom, first conquering Kyaukse and securing the upper Sittang River. In 1535, four years into his reign, Tabinshwehti marched south into Mon territory, employing as many as seven hundred Portuguese mercenaries and taking Bassein and Myaungmya with ease, although he only managed to capture the capital, Pegu, in 1539. Pegu's king fled to Prome, which withstood a siege in 1539; the king, however, died only a year later, in 1540. Tabinshwehti returned to the south in 1541, taking Martaban, Moulmein, Tavoy, and finally Prome in 1542, after a four-month siege. In 1544, he defended Prome against the Shan, and then counterattacked, pushing northward up the Irrawaddy until he captured Pagan, where he claimed the crown of "all Burma" in 1546.

## DEFEAT OF THE SHANS AND SIAM

Tabinishwehti launched an attack on Arakan, a narrow state to the west defended by an all-but-impassable mountain range, and, although he managed to besiege the capital, Myohaung, he was forced to retreat in order to deal with the Siamese, who were rapidly approaching Tavoy. In 1548, he retaliated, invading Siam through Three Pagodas Pass. Although he reached the capital, Ayutthaya, Tabinishwehti failed to take the city and was forced to beat an ignominious retreat. Mon rebels assassinated him upon his return, whereupon his brother-in-law, Bayinnaung, who had distinguished himself in earlier campaigns, took the throne, put down the Mon revolt, and proceeded to do what Tabinishwehti could not, conquering the Shans at Ava in 1554 and Ayutthaya in 1569. Bayinnaung likely would have conquered Arakan as well, but he died on the verge of invading in 1581. The dynasty, which survived until 1752, began to lose territory almost immediately after his death.



Above: *The Irrawaddy River, flowing over 1,240 miles from the northern tip of Myanmar into the southern delta, is the lifeblood of the region and features prominently in its mythology and military history.*

Below: *Statue of King Bayinnaung (1551–1581). Bayinnaung integrated the Shan States into the Burmese kingdoms and created the largest empire in the history of Southeast Asia.*



Below: *The Taunggoo Empire at its peak in 1580 during the reign of King Bayinnaung when it included Manipur, Chinese Shan States, Siam, and Lan Xang. The empire collapsed following Bayinnaung's death in 1581.*





# ANGLO-BURMESE WARS

Myanmar achieved significant military success in the eighteenth century, defeating its neighbors to the south, the great empire of Ayutthaya. They were also able to repel the invasions of the Ming Dynasty during Qianlong Emperor's Ten Great Campaigns. But their supremacy in the region would be short-lived. A new power grew to become a much greater threat in the region: Britain.

## THE BRITISH EXPANSION

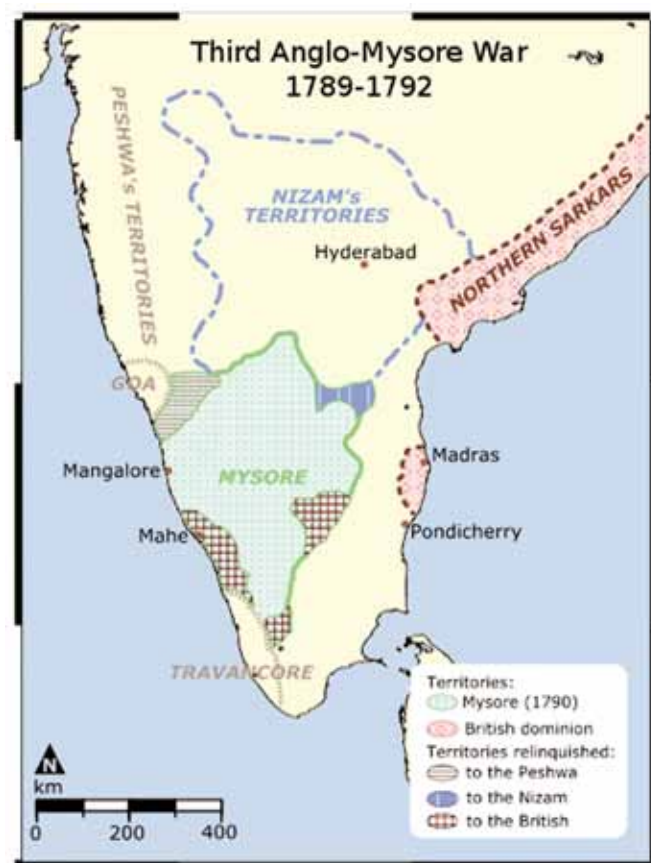
By the early nineteenth century, the British had already brought much of the Indian subcontinent under its control. The final Anglo-Mysore war ended in 1799, and the British then turned to expanding their control in the region and protecting their new acquisitions. Fear of invasions from the north spurred the British to strike out into Afghanistan in a series of conflicts and negotiations that would come to be called the Great Game, designed to prevent Russia from launching an invasion into the Indian subcontinent. And in the east, the great power of Burma loomed, controlling Bengal, Assam, and Arakan.

The conflict really kicked off in the early 1820s when Burma pushed westward from Arakan toward British territory. Many refugees from Arakan had already fled the Burmese into British territory and were eager to fight back. The British, rather than engaging Burma in the hilly terrain of Assam and Arakan launched a naval assault, attacking the mainland of Burma. King Bagyidaw ordered his great generals, Maha Bandula and Thaho Thiri Maha Uzana, back from Bengal, Arakan, and Assam. Despite the difficulty of passage through the region, these generals brought their men successfully over the hills and through the forests during the monsoon to confront the British in Yangon (Rangoon).

## ROCKET POWER

Despite outnumbering the British roughly three to one, the Burmese were ill equipped and had firearms for only about half their men. The British had a smaller, more powerful force with cannon that launched devastating shells, as well as a new class of weapon developed out of experiences in the Anglo-

Below: *Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore and an ally of France, invaded the nearby state of Travancore in 1789, which was an ally of the British. The resultant war lasted three years and was a resounding defeat for Mysore which had to surrender half of its kingdom to Britain and her allies.*



Mysore wars. Mysore had developed and used various kinds of rockets, usually fitted with long bamboo leaders, against the British, often to devastating effect. The British took some of these rockets and, after studying their composition, improved on the design, manufactured them in quantity, and deployed them against the Burmese.

Yangon was soundly defeated, and the Burmese fell back with heavy losses. Another series of costly battles ensued until the Burmese were vanquished at the Battle of Prome in November 1825. The war had been incredibly costly to both sides, and the British imposed strong economic penalties on Burma to make up for having bankrupted Bengal.

In 1852 the British provoked the Burmese to war once again, and were again victorious, enabling them to annex Pegu in the south of modern-day Burma. In 1885, the British concluded the third and final war against the Burmese, taking control of the capital of upper Burma, Mandalay, and laying claim to the territory, incorporating it as a province within the greater British Raj. The British were afraid of French incursions on Burma that would affect the extraction of teak from the region, which had become a primary motive for British control. Teak was a valuable resource in Burma and one that created a profitable industry for the British.

Above: *King Bagyidaw (1784–1846) was the seventh king of the Konbaung Dynasty of Burma from 1819 until his abdication in 1837.*



# INDOCHINA INDEPENDENCE

In the nineteenth century, the French and the British carved up much of the Malaysian Peninsula and Indochina. The British, through a series of wars, took control of Burma and the lands to the west of Burma, such as Arakan and Assam. The French, however, positioned themselves in the east. They were heavily involved in the territories around modern Vietnam starting in the eighteenth century, and by the end of the 1880s establish French Indochina, a territory comprised of modern-day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Thailand, then known as the Kingdom of Siam, proudly asserts today that it was never conquered by a colonial power. It was able to do so in part because of its position as a buffer state between French territories in the east and British territories in the west. By playing the two nations off each other, Siam was able to remain independent.

## THE FRENCH EXIT

The French impact on Indochina was significant, and the French ruled over the region for the better part of a century. The Vietnamese language was even altered by the long interaction with the French. Although the Vietnamese rebelled against their colonial rulers, fighting from 1885 to 1895, it would be another fifty years before independence would become a possibility.

During World War II, the Vichy French granted the Japanese permission access to territories in Indochina, such as Tonkin, to launch its campaigns against China. When France fell to Germany in 1940, the Siamese capitalized on French weakness to retake territories that had previously belonged to Siam. In the French-Thai war of 1940–41, the Thai fought aggressively against the French, demonstrating significant skill in their aerial attacks. Eventually Japan intervened to settle the conflict and ran the negotiations. The Japanese convinced the French to cede territories to Siam, and the conflict ended. In 1945, as the war came to an end in Europe, Japan seized complete control of French Indochina. Not long thereafter, however, the United States dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, bringing an end to the Pacific theater. Japan liberated Indochina from French control, but then was rendered incapable of controlling the region itself. This laid the groundwork for Indochina's independence.

## HO CHI MINH

Meanwhile during this time period, a communist Vietnamese leader who named himself Ho Chi Minh formed and led the Viet Minh movement. The French were eager to reclaim control of Indochina after World War II, but the Viet Minh fought



Above: *The gunboat Lutin stationed in central Bangkok in March 1893. The new French Consul Auguste Pavie demanded that the Siamese evacuate all military posts on the east side of the Mekong River south of Khammuan, claiming that the land belonged to Vietnam. To back up these demands, the French sent the gunboat Lutin to Bangkok.*



Above: *Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969), was the Vietnamese Communist leader and the main force behind the Vietnamese struggle against French colonial rule. The Vietminh seized power and proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in August 1945. Ho Chi Minh became president.*

against this and in August of 1945 Ho Chi Minh proclaimed Vietnamese Independence and established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Tensions between the Vietnamese and French increased, resulting in the First Indochina War of 1946. A series of armed conflicts involving the French, Vietnamese, Laotians, Cambodians, and Chinese ensued for the next eight years. The United States provided military supplies and arms to the French, and the Soviet Union supported the Viet Minh.

In April 1954, the armed struggle came to an end with the Geneva Conference. The Geneva Accords, signed in July of that year, were primarily concerned with bringing the armed hostilities to an end, demarking ceasefire zones, and establishing a course for withdrawal to facilitate peace in Indochina. This also brought an end to French colonial power in Indochina, and Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam became independent countries as a result.



Above: *1933, The Coronation of King Prajadhipok of Siam.*



Left: *Map of Southeast Asia showing the extent of communist control during the First Indochina War. Although most of the fighting between French forces and their Viet Minh opponents took place in Tonkin in Northern Vietnam, the conflict engulfed the entire country.*



# THE VIETNAM WAR

At the end of World War II, Ho Chi Minh, a Vietnamese nationalist and dedicated communist, returned from abroad to lead the fight against the remaining Japanese occupiers and the French, who were trying to reestablish colonial control over his native country. The Japanese were quickly dispatched, but it took eight years and a shattering 1953 French defeat at Dien Bien Phu to evict France. The Geneva Peace Accords of 1954 recognized a demarcation line between Ho's Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the north and South Vietnam, whose leader, Ngo Dinh Diem, was supported by France and the United States. Diem—dictatorial, paranoid, incompetent—gave Ho an easy advantage, and, in 1959, he launched a communist revolution with the ultimate goal being unification under his government at Hanoi. The American president, John F. Kennedy, concerned about the spread of communism, began sending military advisers to South Vietnam in 1961.



Above: U.S. troops destroying a Viet Cong base camp.

## JUNGLE WAR

Kennedy was determined to halt Ho's Viet Minh army and, for the next two years sent more money and personnel to Diem, who was assassinated in 1963. President Lyndon B. Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy that year, had little interest in Vietnam but saw no way to withdraw without admitting defeat to a "damn little pissant country," unthinkable in the anti-communist Cold War climate.

As a result, for the next four years, American soldiers poured into Vietnam, proceeding to wage one of the most ineffective campaigns in United States military history under the command of General William Westmoreland. The American commanders seemed incapable of adapting to the jungle tactics of the Viet

Right: Map of Vietnam showing the Demilitarized Zone, or DMZ—the area around the former border between North and South Vietnam shown here by a thin red line. The Vietnam War was fought between North Vietnam, and its communist allies, and South Vietnam, supported by the United States.



Minh; South Vietnam, meanwhile, with its poorly trained army, shuffled through one corrupt government after another. Despite sustaining massive casualties, the Viet Minh seemed invincible.

## GOODNIGHT SAIGON

In February 1968, impatient to end the war, the Viet Minh launched a major offensive during Tet, the Vietnamese lunar New Year. More than eighty thousand Viet Minh troops assaulted over one hundred cities, securing the old imperial capital of Hue and seizing the ground floor of the United States embassy in Saigon. Yet, the Tet Offensive was ultimately a failure. The VM could not consolidate their gains; they sustained heavy casualties, and an expected outpouring of South Vietnamese support never materialized—in fact, the South Vietnamese surprised the world with their fierce resistance. The American generals asked for more troops, glimpsing an opportunity, but the American public had turned against the war. Although President Richard Nixon began withdrawing troops, heavy fighting dragged on until 1973, when the United States signed a peace agreement in Paris. As feared, South Vietnam, unable to stand without its American allies, fell during the siege of Saigon in 1975, Ho Chi Minh's dream finally realized at last.



Left: The Tet Offensive was launched on January 30, 1968, during an agreed two-day "cease fire" for the Tet Lunar New Year celebrations. The nationwide offensive was well coordinated, with over 80,000 communist troops striking more than 100 towns.



# MYANMAR: 1962 COUP, 8888 UPRISING

As with French Indochina, World War II provided the opportunity for Burmese independence. The British control of both upper and lower Burma, which had been secured in the third Anglo-Burmese war by 1887, had had devastating effect on the Burmese culture, society, and economy. The territory was seen as a great resource for the British owing to its teak and rice production. Hundreds of thousands of acres of forest were cleared and made into rice fields. The British also viewed Burma as a potential road into China.



Above: *In the 8888 uprising hundreds of thousands of people, including monks and students, demonstrated against the regime. The protests were met with extreme force resulting in many hundreds of deaths.*

Below right: *Aung San Suu Kyi giving a speech to supporters at Hlaing Thar Yar Township in Yangon, Myanmar on November 17, 2011, just days after her release from house arrest.*

Below left: *Monks leading anti-government protests in Myanmar.*



## INDEPENDENCE

With such a strong emphasis on export, the Burmese economy served only to enrich the British rulers, while the local populations became seriously impoverished. Perhaps more devastating, however, was the British abolishment of the Burmese monarchy, which had a tremendous psychological impact on the country. The

British furthermore eliminated the importance of religion in state affairs, and the monasteries lost their position of esteem, respect, and power. With the establishment of secular schools, even this function was stripped from them.

When the Burmese gained independence in 1947, they had no remaining systems for their own government. The monarchy was long gone and the monasteries had fallen into decline. Control of the country thereby shifted to Burmese socialists and military leaders who had been trained in Japan. Thakin Nu, who took the name U Nu after independence, became the first prime minister of the country under the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL). When he came to power, he had a tremendous amount of unrest to deal within the country. Several different groups with different motivations and concerns rebelled, fought, and demonstrated. Red flag communists, White Flag communists, members of the Burmese army, and several other groups all led rebellions. Furthermore, a large population of the Kuomintang—the nationalist party of China—had settled in the north of the country after being expelled from China, and it took many years for U Nu to drive them out.

In 1958, internal tensions within the government led U Nu to invite military commander Ne Win to take control of the government temporarily. Ne Win did so, and was able to



Above: *U Nu meeting with Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi in 1947, shortly after becoming the first Prime Minister of the newly independent Burma.*

restore order. The country held political elections in 1960 and U Nu was reelected. Ne Win passed control back over to his predecessor. Within two years, however, Ne Win would lead a military coup against U Nu and seize control of the country.

## OPPOSITION FROM WITHIN

Ne Win enforced law and order with an iron fist. Student uprisings protesting his ascent to power were immediately, and violently, put down. Ne Win's Burma was renamed Myanmar and began a single-party state. His nationalization of the economy failed to provide economic stability, and he finally resigned in 1988 amid great unpopularity. Protests raged throughout the summer of that year, including a massive student uprising that began in Yangon on August 8, 1988, which has come to be known as the 8888 Uprising. The government attempted to put down the protests through force, and in September of that year, an even harsher military leader, Saw Aung, took control of the country. In 1990, the country held elections that were facilitated by the military, and the National League for Democracy (NLD) won 80 percent of the parliamentary seats. But the military refused to hand over control to the NLD. Chairperson of the party, Aung San Suu Kyi, was placed under house arrest and her sons had to accept the Nobel Peace Prize on her behalf in 1991. Suu Kyi remained under house arrest for nearly fifteen years.





# SOUTH THAILAND INSURGENCY

Although Thailand was never conquered by a colonial European power, that does not mean the country did not undergo serious transformations from the effects of colonialism and contact with the British and French. Siam became a constitutional monarchy in 1932 and was renamed Thailand in 1938 by its military dictator, Phibun Songkhram. During World War II, Thailand saw Germany's conquest of France as an opportunity to regain territories from French Indochina. Thailand would then turn to Britain and France for help against the Japanese, who came pouring into Thailand for strategic positions to attack China. Phibun changed tactics, and signed a treaty with the Japanese, turning against Britain and the United States. Despite this, Thailand would see tremendous financial and military support from the United States during the 1950s, which helped usher in a period of tremendous economic and industrial growth that would last into the 1990s.

## CORRUPT ENTREPRENEUR TAKES OVER

Thailand continued to be controlled by military dictatorships, and the country has undergone significant political upheaval and reform, particularly in the 1970s and continuing through to the 1990s, when a series of protests were met with violence and the king intervened to establish new elections and a new period of democracy for the country.

In the early 2000s, a man named Thaksin Shinawatra came to the forefront of Thai politics. An entrepreneur who had built Thailand's largest telecommunications company, Thaksin had the financial resources and connections to run large-scale political campaigns. Using new forms of advertising and other strategies from the business world, Thaksin's party, Thai Rak Thai (Thai Love Thai), was able to secure a majority of parliamentary seats in the 2005 elections.

Despite his ability to win the affection of the Thai people during his campaign, Thaksin came under fire for appearing to have won by buying his way to power. Under the scrutiny of his opponents, Thaksin also came to be seen as slyly jockeying for even greater power. More than this, his violent military response to insurgencies in the south caused greater unrest in the region. Tensions mounted quickly and Thaksin was ousted by a coup in 2006, and subsequently convicted on charges of corruption.

## IGNORED BLOODSHED IN THE SOUTH

Meanwhile, the violent insurgencies of southern Thailand have continued to this day. The exact source and impetus of the aggression remains somewhat ambiguous, since the violence consists largely of terrorist attacks on schools and civilians. The perpetrators are Muslim extremists who feel they do not have sufficient representation in the Thai government and that they have been repressed. Many of the victims of the car bombings and shootings, however, have been Muslim civilians. The sporadic, disorganized, and untargeted nature of the attacks has made them difficult to deal with. Fighting with force, as Thaksin did, has not worked, and the political coups and unrest in Bangkok have kept the national government distracted from the problems of the south. More recently, however, the Thai government has been working harder to address this serious issue. More than 5,000 deaths have been counted as a result of this violence since 2004. Most of the attacks are in the regions of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Songkhla.

The current king of Thailand, Rama IX, is the world's longest-serving head of state, having taken the throne in 1946.

Right: His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) in ceremonial attire. The King of Thailand is the head of state and a symbolic figurehead with limited powers. Nevertheless, he is the Defender of the Buddhist Faith and commands the respect and reverence of the Thai people. Rama IX has held the throne since June, 1946, making him the world's longest reigning current monarch.



Above: Thaksin Shinawatra in a meeting at the Pentagon in 2005. He became prime minister following a historic election victory in 2001, and was the country's first prime minister to serve a full term. However, his government faced serious allegations of misconduct, including corruption, conflict of interest, and even treason. Thaksin fled the country and, in October, 2008, the Thailand Supreme Court found him guilty of a conflict of interest and sentenced him in absentia to two years imprisonment.









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# THE OLMEC

Often described as the first civilization of Mesoamerica, the Olmec are known from three principal excavation sites: San Lorenzo (active primarily from c. 1200 to 900 BC), La Venta (c. 900 to 600 BC), and Tres Zapotes (c. 900 to 500 BC). Another major but less well-documented site, Laguna de los Cerros, was active from roughly 1200 to 1000 BC. All of these “heartland” Olmec sites lie in the Tuxtla Mountains, in what is today southern Mexico, but the Olmecs developed an extensive trading network that stretched from Honduras to Guerrero in western Mexico. Archaeological discoveries at these and secondary sites are the only source of information about the Olmecs, and these sites have, to date, produced quite varied interpretations.



Above: *Altar 4 is one of seven basalt altars at La Venta, the pre-Columbian archaeological site of the Olmec, near present-day Tabasco, Mexico. It reached its zenith around 900 BC. After 500 years, it was all but abandoned.*



Above: *Carved before 1000 BC, the San Martin Pajapan Monument sits atop a dormant volcano. This statue depicts a young lord in a headdress and mask.*

## WAR AMONG THE OLMECS

Little direct evidence exists to show how, or against whom, the Olmecs made war. Depictions of apparent violence in Olmec art, such as a man with a rope around his neck carved into an altarlike stone at La Venta (Altar 4), may actually have more to do with religion, although it may also depict a prisoner of war, destined for sacrifice to the Olmec gods. Olmec warriors may also have protected merchants, forged new trading routes, or established secure locations for use as marketplaces; if so, the Olmecs' economic advantages, evident from the archaeology, stemmed directly from their prowess as warriors. The fact that scholars date both increasing military activity and the beginning of Olmec cultural dominance to around 1150 BC supports this argument. It is also at this point that the artwork of Olmec rulers begins to include weaponry and, arguably, prisoners.

Olmec warrior bands were small, fewer than one hundred or even fifty members, and drawn very likely from the social elite. Armed with obsidian-edged knives, obsidian-tipped spears, or clubs, these warrior bands, which probably did not conquer outright, may have demanded tribute, as later Mesoamerican peoples did. Most scholars agree that in many cultural arenas, including the religious, architectural, and political spheres, the Olmecs inspired later states, so it is reasonable to assume that their military tactics were copied as well. The probability of armed intra-Olmec conflict is also high.



Above: *The almond-shaped eyes and downturned mouth are typical of Olmec masks, which were often stylized. Masks were carved from different materials, including jade, and are thought to have represented a deity, perhaps the rain god. Some were small enough to be worn as pendants.*



Right: *Mesoamerica at the time of Spanish conquest included what is today central and southern Mexico, the Yucatán Peninsula, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, and parts of Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.*



# THE MAYA

The Maya, who built one of the greatest and longest-lived civilizations of pre-Columbian Mesoamerica, appear in the archaeological record as early as 1500 BC, but their rise to prominence did not begin until around AD 250. At their height, in the Classic period (c. AD 250–900), the Maya established hundreds of cities and powerful states throughout the Yucatán Peninsula, through Guatemala, southeastern Mexico, and the western edge of Honduras. Their stone pyramids, palaces, and colorful frescoes continue to attract attention from their descendants, the general public, and the academic community. Academics, particularly in the last few decades, have revised their previous assessment of the Classic Maya as peaceful astronomers. On the contrary, from the beginning to the end of their grand civilization, the Maya never ceased to engage in brutal warfare.

## AX WARS AND STAR WARS

Scholars argue about why the Mayans waged war on one another, but we do know that the Maya had a fourfold categorization of war that includes concepts similar to Western ones, such as *hubi* (destruction) and shell-star wars (respectively, razing an enemy site and conquering), as well as *chu-c'ah* (capture) and *ch'ak* (ax) wars. These might be planned, scripted, and highly ritualized, and often culminated in the capture of one or more prisoners. High-ranking prisoners were required in the case of *ch'ak*.

In a famous *ch'ak* war in AD 738, the ruler of Copán—known as Eighteen Rabbit—was captured and beheaded by Quirigua. Until then, Quirigua had been vassal to Copán, which, according to its own propaganda, had previously been one of the four major Mayan centers, along with Tikal, Palenque, and Calakmul. Thus, even *chu-c'ah* and *ch'ak* wars, with low but symbolically vital casualties, could have major political consequences. Different types of war could also intertwine: thus Tikal's *ch'ak* against Caracol was punished by a shell-star in AD 562, which propelled Caracol into power. The city, in turn, proceeded to inflict *hubi* and shell-star wars against Naranjo (the contemporary inscriptions emphasize bound captives).

## BLOOD IN THE TEMPLE

Warfare intensified throughout the Classic and Post-Classic periods, as cities rose and fell, conquering their neighbors and then declining or falling into vassalage themselves. Mayan cities were often fortified against attack (Chichén Itzá, the most powerful Early Post-Classic city, is a notable exception). From the Pre-Classic period on, however, Mayan rulers were required to secure captives to confirm their exalted position—early depictions show kings with trophy heads at their belts—and although the iconography faded, the practice continued; kings also needed captives to worship the gods, whose propitiation required human blood. Unremitting wars took a heavy toll on the Maya, who were already in decline by the time the Spanish arrived in the sixteenth century. By then, internecine wars abounded, single battles reportedly claiming more than 100,000 lives. These numbers, while no doubt exaggerated, point to constant warfare as a significant factor in the collapse of Mayan civilization.



Above: *The Mayan calendar was based upon a system that dated to the fifth century BC. It consisted of several cycles, or counts, of different lengths.*



Left: *This Mayan stucco head dates from the Classic period (AD 300–900). Stucco portraits were courtly art, depicting kings or nobility and promoting their power.*

Above: *The Great Pyramid at Mundo Perdido (Lost World) Tikal was a sacred site for the Maya. Part of a larger complex, it was used to observe the stars and planets. The Lost World complex comprises thirty-eight structures.*

Early Pre-Classic	Middle Pre-Classic	Late Pre-Classic	Early Classic	Late Classic	Terminal Classic	Early Post-Classic	Late Post-Classic
1200–1000 BC	1000–300 BC	300 BC–AD 250	AD 250–600	AD 600–900	AD 900–1000	AD 900–1200	AD 1200–1524



# THE INCA

Until the fourteenth century, the Inca were just one of several peoples living in the Andean highlands, wresting a hardscrabble existence from the vertiginous slopes of the world's longest mountain range. But in that century, the fourth member of the Inca dynasty, based from about 1250 in Cuzco (in modern Peru), began an expansion that would ultimately become the vast Inca Empire, the largest pre-Columbian territory in the Americas. The Incans as well as other Andean peoples sometimes used bronze-edged clubs, but their primary weapons—spears (stone-tipped), bows and arrows, stone clubs, and slings—were crafted of stone, wood, and leather. By all accounts, the Inca were adaptable, fierce, and completely comfortable among the steep Andean peaks, and within a century they had expanded from modern Columbia through Chile, bringing as many as 12 million people into their dominion.



*A patchwork of languages, cultures, and peoples, the Inca Empire was expanded through conquest and assimilation.*

## The Lost City

Resistance to Spanish rule focused on fortresses in remote, mountainous locations, on slopes so steep that the Spanish could not bring their artillery up them or across valleys crossable only by single-file, narrow rope bridges. One of these fortresses, Ollantaytambo, was never conquered, despite a determined siege in 1536, but the Inca abandoned it after betrayal and defection. Hope of rebellion lingered at the last mountain fortress, Vilcabamba, until the last leader of the Incan military, Tupac Amaru, died in 1572. The Spanish arrived to find it burned and deserted. And then Vilcabamba was forgotten, left to be swallowed by the rain forest and legends. It became known as the Lost City of the Incas because the Spanish never recorded its location. One twentieth-century explorer, Professor Hiram Bingham, misidentified Machu Picchu, probably a palace of Pachacuti's, as the Lost City. Not until the 1960s, four hundred years later, was Vilcabamba finally rediscovered, on a site by then called Espiritu Pampa, the "Pampas of Ghosts."



*Above: Pizarro sentenced Atahualpa to burning for leading the revolt. The Inca believed the soul could not enter the afterlife if the body were burned. He converted to Catholicism and was garroted, according to his request.*

## MASTERS OF THE MOUNTAINS

The most famous Inca, Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui ("Inca" here meaning "leader of the empire and commander in chief"), usurped the throne from his brother in 1438. His ancestors had already initiated expansion, but it is Pachacuti who laid the foundations of true empire. In the year of his ascension, another Andean people eager to expand, the Chanka, made war on the Inca that culminated in the Battle of Cuzco. Pachacuti turned the Chanka back, and then conquered them, subsequently subjugating the Quechua and the kingdom of Chimu (successor state to the Moche); between campaigns, he redesigned much of the capital city of Cuzco. Pachacuti's successors, Topa Inca Yupanqui (1471–93) and Huayna Capac (1493–1525), pushed the empire's boundaries to their extraordinary limits, from the Ancasmayo River in the north to Talca in the south. They adopted local religions, adding gods to their pantheon but insisting that Inti, chief of the Inca gods, be recognized above all: this syncretistic approach, along with forced relocations of conquered peoples, stitched the empire into a unified whole.

## CONQUEST

At the time of European contact, the Inca were unrivaled in South America. Standing armies defended and prepared to expand the empire still farther; as many as 90,000 warriors, divided into three armies, could be called up at a moment's notice. No preindustrial nation, not even ancient Rome, constructed better roads than the Inca, who built between 15,000 and 25,000 miles of roadway through incredibly steep terrain. Besides facilitating trade and administration throughout the highly structured empire, the roads allowed the Incan armies to move with astonishing speed.

Francisco Pizarro, a Spanish conquistador, arrived in Peru in 1532, the same year that Atahualpa defeated his brother Huáscar for the throne. Atahualpa understandably dismissed the Spanish threat, for the conquistadors at first invaded with only about 100 men. (Indeed, the Incans scored some impressive victories by luring Spaniards into slender mountain passes and rolling boulders on top of them.) But the Spanish technology far outstripped that of the Incas: steel helmets were more than a match for stone and bronze. In 1536, Cuzco, defended by 200,000 Incas, fell to a mere 190 conquistadors. The empire was lost, but resistance, organized from inaccessible mountain fortresses, would last until 1572.



# THE AZTECS

By the time the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived in Mesoamerica in 1519, the Aztecs reigned supreme over as many as six million people from their capital of Tenochtitlán, located in the middle of Lake Texcoco. Though the Aztecs migrated to the area early in the thirteenth century, they did not found Tenochtitlán until the mid-fourteenth century. Their arrival coincided with, and may have contributed to, the fall of the Toltec kingdom, creating a vacuum soon filled by Tenochtitlán and two neighboring allies, the city-states Texcoco and Tlacopan. These soon declined, however, leaving the Aztecs the lone power in the region.



*The Shuar Indians—members of the Jivaroan peoples of the Amazon regions of present-day Ecuador and Peru—are the only culture to practice head shrinking, which is done for spiritual protection. In 1599, the Jivaro destroyed Spanish settlements in eastern Ecuador, killing all the men.*



## RISE OF THE AZTECS

Between 1428 and 1519, the Aztecs embarked on a series of wars and battles that spread their territory from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. Like the Maya, as well as the Olmecs and other Mesoamerican peoples, the Aztecs practiced human sacrifice, using the blood of war captives to propitiate their gods. As many as twenty thousand captives may have been sacrificed per year in Tenochtitlán; some view the practice as the driving factor behind constant Aztec expansion. This view has been recently challenged by more cynical historians who feel religious motivations have often been applied retrospectively to legitimize purely political wars of aggression. War and religion were certainly intertwined, however; priests decided when and if wars were fought and marched to war alongside, or even in front of, invading armies, and soldiers would practice autosacrifice, ritually shedding their own blood before leaving for conquest.

## NOCHE TRISTE

Hernán Cortés brought 500 men with him to Mexico, hardly enough to overcome the mighty Aztec Empire. Spanish technology, however, greatly outmatched the Mesoamericans, who used copper-tipped arrows and javelins but had no iron (no one in the Americas did, a fact noted by Christopher Columbus in 1492). Horses, cannons, and—deadliest of all—European diseases rounded out the Spanish arsenal. In addition, the Spanish were masters at exploiting existing tensions: instead of making for the gold-filled coffers of Tenochtitlán directly, Cortés first secured alliances with the Totonacs and the most determined of Aztec enemies, the powerful Tlaxcalla. With these advantages, he marched from Tlaxcalla to Cholula, which he reduced, then besieged Tenochtitlán. This proved a surprisingly hard nut to crack: few cities in Mesoamerica were fortified, so the Spanish rarely used their cannons, but Tenochtitlán was situated in the middle of a lake and fiercely defended.

*Above: Although he initially greeted Aztec ruler Montezuma II with a false show of friendship—giving him presents of gold, jade, and valuable feathers—Cortés proved himself to be an enemy of the Aztecs, keeping Montezuma prisoner in his own palace and eventually murdering him.*



*Above: The Templo Mayor was a main temple of the Aztecs, located at their capital city, now Mexico City. It was dedicated to the god of war, Huitzilopochtli, and the god of rain, Tlaloc. The Spanish destroyed the temple in 1521; the remaining archaeological site is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.*

The first attempt, from November 8, 1519, to July 1, 1520, was a disaster: the Spanish were forced to retreat, with 450 of their own and 4,000 Tlaxcallan allies dead. The Spanish called the night of their escape, June 30, *noche triste*, “the night of sorrows.”

Cortés returned with more than 700 of his countrymen and 70,000 Native allies. Dividing this formidable force in three, he stationed one portion at each of the three causeways linking Tenochtitlán to the mainland, destroying the aqueduct providing fresh water to the city, and employing his cannons. Still Tenochtitlán would not surrender. Three months of heavy fighting and bombardment reduced the city to rubble. The last true Aztec emperor, Montezuma II, had already died in a Spanish prison; with the capture of his successor, Cuauhtémoc, on August 13, 1521, the Spanish declared victory.

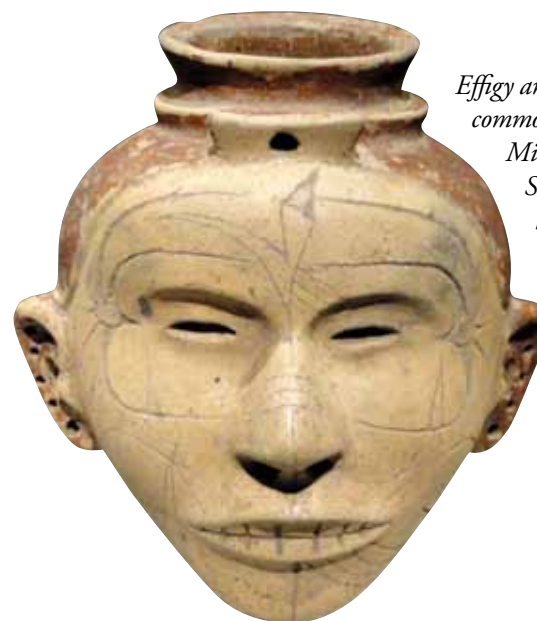
## The Eagle and the Jaguar

Noble Aztec warriors might have aspired to belong to one of two elite warbands, the Eagle (*cuaubtlī*) or Jaguar (*ocelotl*) orders. Their costumes were constructed of skins and feathers, and reflected each order's symbolism. Eagle warriors typically fought in the daytime, and were associated with the power of the sun; Jaguars were associated with the night and nature deities. To become a member of these orders, warriors had to capture at least four prisoners in battle. The warriors were awarded animal skins featuring aspects of the animals, like power and speed; their blood, shed in battle, was considered sacred. In the ritualized *xochiyaoyotl* (“flower war”), these warriors would clash on sacred ground. The slain were *teomiqui*, “they who die in godlike fashion,” their deaths, *xochimiquiztli*, flowery or fortunate.

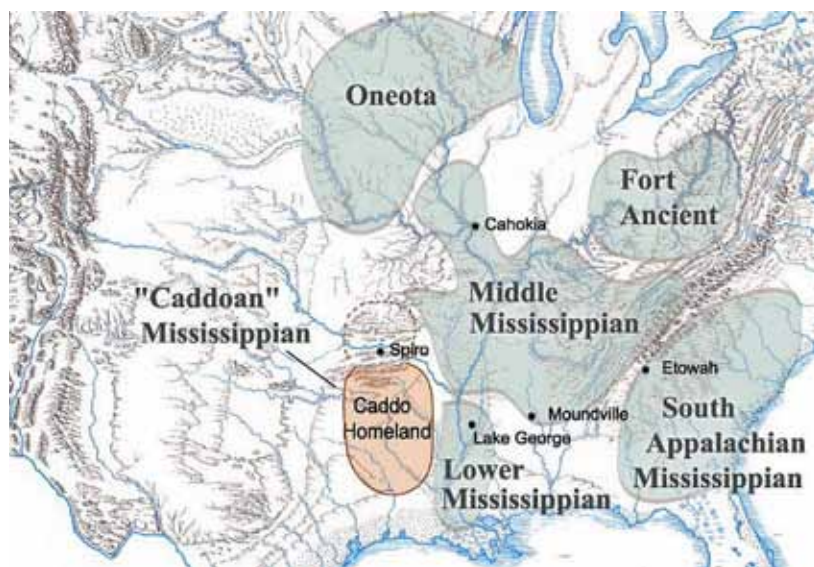


# PREHISTORIC NORTH AMERICA

Humans first arrived in North America during the last ice age, when lower sea levels and glaciers exposed Beringia, a land bridge located near the modern Bering Strait. The chronology of human settlement is difficult to determine with any accuracy, proposed dates often differing by many thousands of years; Monte Verde, the earliest human settlement found by archaeologists, dates to c. 10,500 BC, but the first migrations may have occurred much earlier.



*Effigy and head pots were common among the Mississippian peoples. Shaped like human heads, usually male, the images are of deceased people.*



*Left: Some Iroquois lived along the St. Lawrence River and around the Great Lakes.*



*Above: The Hidatsa tribe, or Minnetaree, are shown in Scalp Dance of the Minnetaree. They kidnapped Sacagawea and sold her to a French trapper. She later became an interpreter for Lewis and Clark.*

## Mississippian Culture

One of the great prehistoric North American cultures, the Mississippian culture, developed along the Mississippi River and river systems to the east around AD 700. It is one of the only North American cultures to build something approximating cities, and it is responsible for the remarkable complex known as the Cahokia Mounds, a cultural center that may have supported as many as forty thousand people. The largest mound at Cahokia—also the Western Hemisphere's largest prehistoric earthen construction—stands 100 feet high. Such mounds distinguish the Mississippian culture, but their purpose remains speculative. Various factors, including increasing warfare, caused the Mississippian culture to collapse after developing for some 700 years.

## PREHISTORIC WARFARE

America's first settlers spread out across the continent for thousands of years preceding the arrival of the Europeans in the fifteenth century. Although cultures developed differently in different locations, agriculture, generally speaking, became more prevalent over time, especially spurred by climate change toward the beginning of the Archaic period (from c. 8000 BC). Certain cultural features of warfare emerged among the peoples of North America during this time, many of them still operative at the time of European settlement. Archaeological discoveries of several individuals who died of violence along the Green and Tennessee Rivers attest to the fact that wars did occur, low population numbers notwithstanding. In rare cases, projectile points have been found embedded in skeletons.

In 1951 Marion Smith identified a specific complex of aggressive behaviors that had developed among American Indians alongside corn agriculture. Smith identified four types of war: social contests, which were not primarily homicidal and occurred within a group; war parties, a raid on a neighboring enemy; shame-aggression wars, in which a person who had suffered a loss of prestige killed an enemy in order to regain his honor; and the most violent of the four, mourning wars, a party seeking revenge for a perceived wrong. Trophy-taking occurred in the last three; while entire corpses could serve as trophies, warriors often took only parts of the slain bodies. Scalping remained a favorite trophy-taking custom from late prehistory period to the historical era.

## CULTURE GROUPS

North American Indians, prior to the European settlement, tended to live in small bands, several of which could form tribes, which themselves could act in loose coordination. The Iroquois Confederacy, perhaps the most famous arrangement of this sort, was a league of five (later six) Indian tribes based in what is today western New York State. According to modern anthropological assessments, the Iroquois belonged to the "Northeast" culture group, one of ten culture groups in North America. These included the American Arctic, American Subarctic, Northwest Coast, Plateau, Plains, California, Great Basin, Southwest, and Southeast groups. These culture groups tended to speak related languages, use similar technologies, and operate under similar cultural guidelines; it should not be assumed, however, that the people of these culture groups considered themselves related to each other. The great enemies of the Iroquois Confederacy, for example, were other Northeast tribes, specifically the Huron and Mohican.

*Below: Monk's Mound in Illinois contains two billion pounds of rare, colored soils not local to the area; they are layered in a complex system.*





# PEQUOT WAR

Founded by religious dissidents seeking safe ground for worship, the Massachusetts Bay Colony was granted a royal charter from England in 1629. It also received a large swathe of modern New England—withstanding the fact that many Native American tribes already lived there. It took just six years for the white colonists and the Pequot Indians, one of the most powerful tribes in the region, to come to blows.

## PEQUOT REVENGE AND SMALLPOX

As Dutch and British colonists pushed ever farther inland, small-scale hostilities resulted in fatalities. One of these was Captain John Stone, killed by Pequots who (apparently) believed him to be Dutch. The Massachusetts authorities insisted that his killers be turned in, but the Pequots refused, insisting that the guilty parties were all either vanished, dead, or dying of smallpox. The Native peoples had no immunity to this disease, carried by the Europeans, which had already caused large-scale epidemics and resulted in significant disruption of the region's population. One outcome of this turmoil was increased conflict between the Pequots and neighboring tribes, including the Mohegans and the Narragansett.

In June 1636, a Mohegan chief informed the Massachusetts authorities that the Pequots were planning a large attack; the following month Narragansett, or an allied tribe based on Block Island, attacked and killed John Oldham and his crew. On August 25, 1636, a company of Englishmen struck out for Block Island, looking for revenge, but gained little satisfaction, since most of the population had fled. The Narragansett condemned Oldham's death, and claimed that the Pequots were now sheltering the killers; a few days later, Captain Endecott, having returned from Block Island, now led his company against the Pequot directly. Both the Pequot and the English appealed to the Narragansett, who chose the English over their old enemies, but from the fall of 1636 through early spring of 1637, the Pequot claimed the upper hand, besieging Fort Saybrook and killing several settlers in an April attack.

Below: *Massachusetts sent ninety men under John Endicott to Block Island with orders to "massacre all of the Native men on the island." The attack was in reprisal for the killing of Boston trader John Oldham; it was a crucial event in igniting the war.*



Above: *The seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony pictured a dejected Indian saying "Come over and help us." The biblical reference implied that they needed salvation.*

## COLONISTS AND INDIANS

After the death of the settlers, the Plymouth and Connecticut colonies joined forces with the Massachusetts colonists, now also bolstered by the addition of several Mohegan warriors. On May 26, 1637, a force of 100 Englishmen and 80 Mohegans attacked a large Pequot village on the Mystic River. Taken by surprise, the Pequot were virtually annihilated: from a population of close to 800, up to 700 were slaughtered, primarily women, older men, and children. Another seven were taken captive. The surviving Pequot fled, beset by Narragansett, until the last group of resistance was uncovered in a swamp near New Haven. After a fierce but one-sided battle on July 13, 1637, the Pequot tribe became nearly extinct, with survivors sold into slavery as far away as the Caribbean. The war officially ended with the Treaty of Hartford on September 21, 1638.

The Pequot War solidified racist perceptions among the religious colonists from Europe of Indians as untrustworthy, barbaric, ferocious devil-worshippers, and heightened bonds between white colonists who otherwise—for religious reasons—might not have worked together. In what became a familiar and tragic story, however, the various Indian tribes tended to retain their own autonomy. Had the Pequot succeeded in attracting Indian allies, the history of European colonization in North America might have taken a very different path.

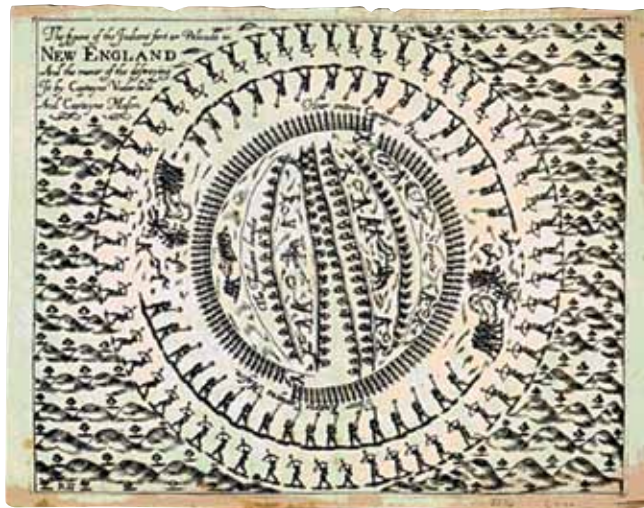
*Colonel Benjamin Church formed the first American ranger force in King Philip's War. Taught by Indian allies, the rangers adopted Indian fighting tactics.*



## King Philip's War

A young Wampanoag leader, or (sachem), Metacom—called King Philip by the English colonists—nearly succeeded in forging a grand Indian alliance against further European incursion. The outbreak of hostilities followed the death of an informant and the subsequent trial and execution of three Wampanoag warriors in early 1675. For the next year Indian raids inflicted the worst damage in New England colonial history: some 600 colonists, including noncombatants, lost their lives, while twelve towns were utterly destroyed and forty more (out of a total of ninety in New England) were attacked. Colonial reprisals against Indian villages were similarly brutal, until the Great Swamp Fight on December 19, 1675, which pitted the English against their former allies the Narragansett, broke the back of Native Indian resistance. On August 12, 1676, Metacom himself was killed. As traumatic as the war was for the colonists, it was far worse for the Native Americans, who were treated mercilessly during and after the war. An estimated 3,000 Indians died, while others were sold into slavery; several tribes never recovered.

Below: *This woodcut depicts the attack on a Pequot village at Mystic on June 5, 1637. It was part of John Underhill's account of the war, published in London in 1638. Underhill was second in command. The attack left over 400 Pequot men, women, and children dead in less than an hour, many of them burned to death.*





# FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

The French and Indian War was the last in a seventy-five-year series of struggles between Great Britain and France for supremacy in North America. Technically, the French and Indian War began with declarations of war in May 1756, but by then hostilities had, in fact, been going on for two years, ever since colonial officers had come to blows over ownership of the upper Ohio River valley. George Washington, the future president of the United States, led the first skirmish of the war as a British officer, defeating a French unit on May 28, 1754. The French, however, had superior land forces and maintained better relationships with their Indian allies; they counterattacked, besieging Washington at Fort Necessity, which fell on July 4, 1754.



*British General James Wolfe, "Hero of Quebec," won the battle in which the French permanently lost Quebec. He was mortally wounded.*

## The Seminole Wars

Relations between white settlers and Native Americans were rarely good, although in general France more successfully engaged the Indians in peaceful trade than did Britain, Spain, or other colonial powers. Regrettably, the United States of America emulated the British example, in terms of poor relationships and aggressive actions. In a series of three wars, in 1817–18, 1835–42, and 1855–58, the United States laid waste to the Seminoles of Florida—despite their spirited resistance under Chief Osceola (1804–1838), seizing Spanish territories in the process and forcing the Seminole to relocate. The legacy of the United States' military and diplomatic mistreatment of virtually every Indian tribe it encountered on its westward push through the nineteenth century continues to mar relationships with those who remain today, technically sovereign, on small patches of land scattered throughout the country.

## TROUBLE IN NEW YORK

Great Britain planned to overrun French positions at four strategic points: Fort Duquesne on the Ohio, Fort Niagara on Lake Ontario, Fort St. Frederick on Lake Champlain, and Nova Scotia. Meanwhile, Britain's superior navy would choke French colonies by preventing their resupply from Europe. This strategy, sound in principle and bold in outlook, seemed doomed to failure for the first several years of the war. General Edward Braddock, commander of British forces in North America, lost the battle and his life at Fort Duquesne in July 1755. The French captured intelligence reports, took the offensive, and secured forts Oswego and William Henry, while Indian allies raided British settlements in New York.



*Above: Quebec lies on the north bank of the St. Lawrence River. Montcalm established his army along the north shore. The city was heavily fortified and ships added to its defenses.*

## THE BATTLE OF QUEBEC

The tables began to turn in late 1757, when British prime minister William Pitt adjusted the British empire's focus more fully on the beleaguered North American colonies: the British navy successfully blockaded France and the Gulf of St. Lawrence; the British seized Fort Louisbourg in June 1758 (destroying the French fleet there); and the Iroquois, Shawnee, and Delaware Indians declared peace with Britain on October 21, 1758. Deprived of much of their fighting strength and financial resources, the French retreated. They abandoned and razed Fort Duquesne in November 1758, and lost Fort Carillon the following July.

In June 1759 British and colonial troops, marching on Quebec, found all approaches vigorously defended by increasingly desperate French forces. By September, with winter closing in, Major General James Wolfe directed his men from the St. Lawrence River into the Anse du Foulon, and there his forces managed to scale the cliffs up to the Plains of Abraham, a dangerous climb in the best of circumstances and one the French had assumed the British would not even attempt. On September 13, 1759, the French commander woke to discover 4,800 British troops arrayed against him. Although Quebec had defensive walls—it is the only walled North American city—it was not provisioned for a siege, so in a last, desperate gamble, the Marquis de Montcalm sent his forces, 4,500 in all, to oppose them. The ensuing battle was brief but intense, costing both Montcalm and Wolfe their lives. It was, in fact, the real end of the war, although hostilities would continue for the next two years. Finally, France signed away its eastern North American territory in the Treaty of Paris in 1763, thereby ensuring British hegemony.



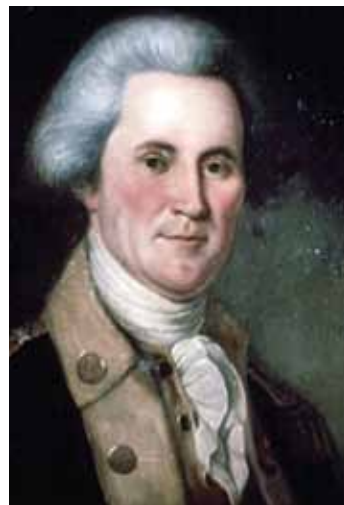
*Left: The British and colonists amassed 17,000 troops to attack Fort Carillon at Ticonderoga. The battle was a disaster for the British, who were repulsed by the greatly outnumbered French and Indian troops (3,000 in all).*

*Above: Native Americans had different fighting techniques from the white men who came into conflict with them. Warriors would work together loosely, but battle lines were not a tactic. The Indians used the natural cover to confuse their enemy, and ambush and surprise attacks were favored.*



# CHICKAMAUGA WAR

Prior to the Revolutionary War, the Cherokee Indians inhabited much of what is now Georgia, Tennessee, and North and South Carolina. Secure in the southern stretches of the Appalachian Mountains, the Cherokee were one of the best-organized and largest nations in North America, but by the mid-eighteenth century European settlers were seriously disrupting their affairs. By the outbreak of the Revolutionary War in 1775, American colonists had already seized much of their land. The Cherokees now lived in three communities: Overhill Towns (in Tennessee), Middle Towns (in North Carolina) and Lower Towns (in South Carolina). As hostilities began, the Cherokee renewed their long-standing alliance with Great Britain and marched off to war.



*A founding father of Tennessee, John Sevier served as governor and representative.*

## DRAGGING CANOE ATTACKS

Cherokees acted precipitously, attacking in force under Tsi'yugunsi'ny (known as Dragging Canoe) in the summer of 1776 at Eaton's Station and Fort Watauga, two colonial outposts. Not only did the colonials repulse these attacks, but the coordinated militias of several southern colonies also responded swiftly and mercilessly, so that the Cherokee sued for peace. In the Treaties of DeWitt's Corner (May 20, 1777), and Long Island of Holston (July 20, 1777), the Cherokee were obliged to relinquish enormous tracts of land.

Not all Cherokee were content with these terms. After the Treaty of Long Island of Holston, Dragging Canoe led a band of separatists in an effort to continue war with the white settlers. Known as the Chickamauga, the separatists called themselves Ani-yuni'wiya ("Real People"), attracting followers from Creek and Shawnee tribes as well. No longer a tribe, the Chickamauga were now a movement.

Dragging Canoe relocated his people to Chickamauga Creek (later Chattanooga, Tennessee), and, in 1779, he and his warriors, aided by Great Britain's shift of operations to the south, began raiding American settlements. A terrific patriot victory at the Battle of King's Mountain on October 7, 1780, however, spelled the beginning of the end for the Chickamauga cause. Freer to concentrate on the Indian threat, the colonials began to move in force against them, not bothering to distinguish Chickamauga from Cherokee. The victor of King's Mountain, Lieutenant Colonel John Sevier, cut a wide swath, massacring and burning villages through Middle Towns and Overhill Towns in 1781, but the Chickamauga refused to relent.

In 1790, the new territorial government of "the Southwest Territory" armed the entire white male population, neutralizing Chickasaw and Choctaw support for the



*Above: In the 1830s, nearly 125,000 Native Americans lived on millions of acres of land in Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Florida. They were forced to leave their homelands and walk thousands of miles to a specially designated "Indian territory" across the Mississippi River.*

Chickamauga by bribing them with food and other much-needed supplies. As governor of the self-proclaimed State of Franklin, John Sevier continued his war against the Chickamauga from 1788 until 1794, when the United States decisively defeated, among other tribes, the Shawnee, an important Chickamauga ally, at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. By then, the British had also halted their material support of the Chickamauga, the Cherokee had been brutalized by retaliatory American attacks, and the Chickamauga, demoralized and alone, abandoned their efforts. Most rejoined the remaining Cherokee in the south; others traveled west. In the end, with the Indian Removal Act of 1830, all the Cherokee would be forced west along the infamous Trail of Tears.

## The Battle of Fallen Timbers

Fought near British-held Fort Miami (near modern Toledo, Ohio), the Battle of Fallen Timbers reversed a string of American losses against the Northwest Indian Confederation. The confederation, which included the Delaware, Shawnee, Iroquois, Miami, Potawatomi, Ottawa, Huron, Chippawa, and other tribes, enjoyed the backing of the British, who had not yet become fully reconciled to the loss of their American colonies. Having handed a humiliating defeat to General Arthur St. Clair in November 1791, a Native army of between 1,000 and 1,500 confidently set a trap for the next major American army sent their way in 1794. Using fallen trees as a kind of natural barricade, the Indians waited for General Arthur Wayne's army of 2,000. Wayne, however, using innovative tactics and weaponry, sprang the trap and crushed the Indians, who were shocked and demoralized to discover that Britain—now engaged in war with France and desirous of keeping the United States neutral—no longer offered their defeated warriors succor or support. Fallen Timbers opened the upper Midwest to American settlement and ended forever the threat of a major British-Indian alliance against the United States.



*Left: American fought American in the Battle of King's Mountain. One thousand Patriot militia routed the "superior" loyalist forces in an hour, killing every man or taking them prisoner. The battle turned the tide of the revolution.*



# THE GREAT SIOUX NATION

During the eighteenth century, the Ojibwa pushed the Sioux Indians westward from their traditional lands, with an enmity that lasts to this day in the inaccurate name “Sioux” (from an Ojibwa word meaning “adders”). In fact, the Indians known as the Sioux belong to seven different tribes that speak one of three related languages—Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota—and include the Santee (or Eastern Dakota), the Yankton (or Western Dakota), and the Teton. By the mid-nineteenth century, a warlike culture, in which males earned honor in raids and battles, and the recent displacement by the Ojibwa, stiffened the resolve of many Sioux not to give way before the encroaching American settlers. This resolve, coming up against such grandiose American visions as “Manifest Destiny,” resulted in decades of bloodshed.



*Before they were displaced, the Dakota lived along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and scattered throughout Minnesota.*

Right: *Red Cloud worked tirelessly for the Lakota: striving to preserve the autonomy of chiefs, opposing the leasing of Lakota land to whites, and fighting in vain for allotment of Indian reservations into individual tracts under the Dawes Act.*

Below: *William Tecumseh Sherman was among those signing the Treaty of Fort Laramie. Indian leaders included Spotted Tail, Roman Nose, and Man Afraid of His Horses.*

## THE TROUBLE WITH TREATIES

By signing the First Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1851, the Dakota Sioux agreed to give up most of modern Minnesota—nearly 24 million acres—in exchange for annuities and other considerations, but government incompetence and corruption created an intolerable situation for the Dakota. Meanwhile, in 1854, a misunderstanding over the death of a cow led to the deaths of a Lakota chief and more than two dozen American soldiers; the following year, General William S. Harney marched off to the First Sioux War (1855–56) against the Lakota, now declared a hostile



tribe. In 1862, starvation among the Dakota inspired an anger that erupted in a brief but violent series of confrontations in settlements along the Minnesota River that left up to 800 settlers and American troops dead. The number of Dakota deaths is unknown, but at the end of the affair, on December 26, 1862, a military court in Minnesota hanged thirty-eight Dakota in the largest mass execution in American history.

The 1851 treaty had given the Sioux and other Plains tribes control over specified

territories, but in 1863 the United States began to build and fortify the Bozeman Trail, used by settlers and gold seekers through Wyoming Territory into Idaho Territory (modern Wyoming into Montana). The trail cut through Indian hunting grounds, while settlers continued to move into Indian territory. In 1865 a Dakota chief named Red Cloud took matters into his own hands. Other Indian tribes, including the Cheyenne and Arapaho, had already skirmished with settlers and the army in Colorado, when Red Cloud led his tribe, the Oglala, against those trying to build and use the Bozeman Trail. In one of the few Indian victories, Red Cloud's unrelenting harassment finally led the United States to abandon the trail in 1868, although in the Second Treaty of Fort Laramie, Red Cloud agreed to resettlement in Nebraska.

## CUSTER'S LAST STAND

The Sioux remained in an uneasy peace with the United States until the discovery of gold in the Black Hills in 1876. Led by Crazy Horse, the Sioux resisted the ensuing flood of American settlers and miners and clashed in the frontier's most famous battle with General George Armstrong Custer on June 25, 1876. Custer had been sent with his division to trap the Sioux (supplanted by the Cheyenne) between his group and that of his commanding officer; Custer instead led a frontal assault on the main camp. He and 212 men died in the now-infamous Battle of the Little Bighorn, an Indian victory that, ironically, ensured the Indians' ultimate defeat. Now determined to eradicate the Sioux threat, the United States army captured and defeated the main strength of the Sioux in November; two months later, they caught Crazy Horse, thus bringing Sioux resistance to an end.



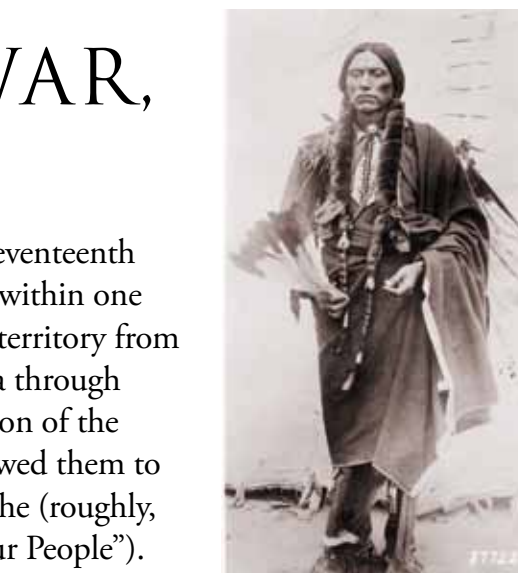
*Above: A pile of animal bones lies at the site where General Custer and his men perished.*

*Left: Crazy Horse Memorial, the world's largest sculpture, now in progress, is located in the Black Hills, 17 miles from Mount Rushmore. It includes the Indian Museum of North America and the Native American Cultural Center.*



# RED RIVER WAR, SNAKE WAR, MODOC WAR

The Comanche tribe—dismissed as unorganized and unimportant at the end of the seventeenth century—moved from the Platte River in modern Wyoming to the Great Plains and, within one hundred years, came to dominate the southern Plains. Operating in a broad swath of territory from San Antonio, Texas, to modern Scott City, Kansas, and from the middle of Oklahoma through eastern New Mexico, their newfound hegemony depended in large part on the adoption of the horse, brought to North America by Europeans. This new form of transportation allowed them to become deadly hunters of both bison and human enemies. Their very name, Comanche (roughly, “bellicose person”), is not a Comanche word; they called themselves Nermernuh (“Our People”).



*Quanah Parker led Comanches, Cheyennes, and Kiowas in ultimately futile raids after the Medicine Lodge Treaty was signed.*

## COWBOYS AND INDIANS

During the 1830s and 1840s, the Comanche and their Kiowa allies struck hard at settlements in Texas, at the time an independent nation. Initial victories against the Texans came to a rough end at the Battle of Plum Creek on August 12, 1840, and a massacre at Red Fork two months later; by 1859 the Comanche had been driven out of Texas (then part of the United States) and into Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

Nevertheless, friction continued as white settlers pushed west, taking over grazing ground for cattle, squatting on Native land, and killing bison, upon which the Comanche survived, in staggering numbers. Comanche raids increased during the 1860s, when the United States was preoccupied by the Civil War and the bison population neared extinction, with corresponding starvation among the Comanche. After the Civil War ended, however, government troops responded to Comanche raids with increased severity. General William T. Sherman, using methods similar to those he employed against the rebellious South, burned Comanche camps, supplies, and crops, slaughtering livestock wholesale.

## THE RED RIVER WAR

Several violent engagements occurred in the early 1870s, American troops whittling away at Comanche livelihoods but rarely joining them in battle outright. Meanwhile, Isatai, a charismatic young medicine man of the Kwahadi (one of several Comanche bands), began gathering support not only among the Comanche but also among the Kiowa and Cheyenne Indians, all of whom had been more or less unwillingly settled

in Indian Territory as a result of the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867. Isatai inspired some five thousand Natives to abandon Indian Territory and return to their traditional lands; on June 27 he led an attack on Adobe Walls, in Texas. The battle was the first in the Red River War, violent but brief, and the last major effort of the Comanche to resist white settlement.

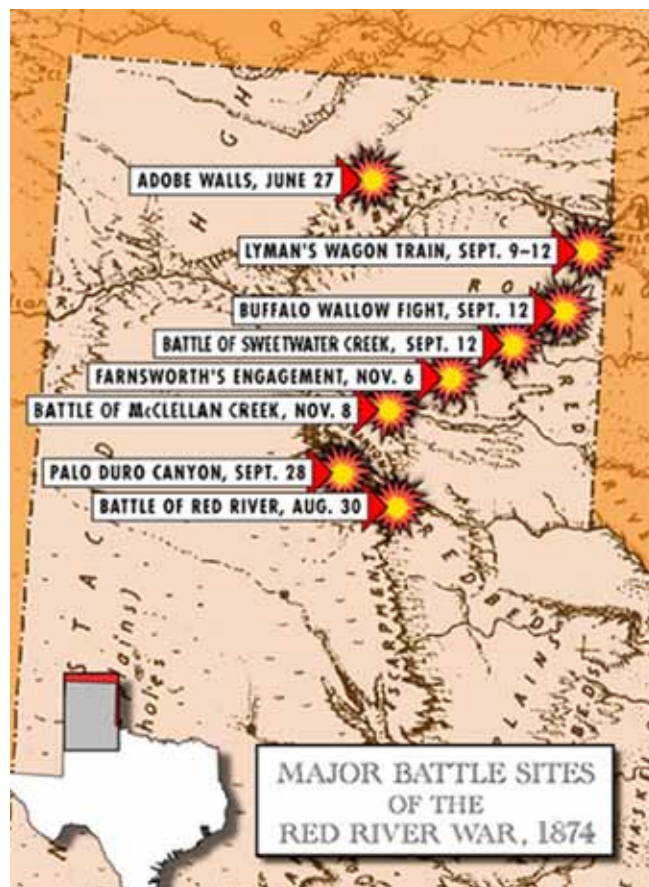
Fourteen pitched battles occurred in the southern plains over the next twelve months, but most resistance shattered at the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon on September 5, 1874. Although few Indians died, they fled a surprise assault and had to abandon 1,500 horses, the lifeblood of the Comanche nation. Only the most determined warriors, led by the famous Quanah Parker of the Kwahadi band, kept fighting. When Quanah surrendered at Fort Sill on June 2, 1875, the Red River War ended, and with it, the last hope of an independent Comanche nation.

*Below: This vintage map shows Austin, Texas, 1875.*



*Below: Comanche buffalo hunters sit by their tepees. By 1879 the buffalo had disappeared from the Plains.*

*Below: The buffalo hunt was part of the traditional Plains Indian way of life, which died along with the herds.*



*Left: The Red River War, between Americans and Natives fighting to retain ancestral lands, ended in 1875 with the defeat of the Indians.*





# WOLVES OF THE SEA

Whether one agrees with the statement that human life in a state of nature is “nasty, brutish, and short,” the philosopher Thomas Hobbes’s pessimistic view certainly aligns with the lives of the buccaneers and privateers who, from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, stalked the seas in the Age of Sail. Although piracy was nothing new—pirates troubled the ancient Mediterranean empires, and still operate around the world today—the occupation rose to new heights in the sixteenth century, when improved shipping technologies, nearly constant warfare between European countries, and the colonization of the Americas proved potent catalysts for piracy.



*Pirate ships required several features: they had to be fast, with a shallow draft; nimble enough to hide in coves away from pursuers; and able to carry plenty of fighting men and loot.*

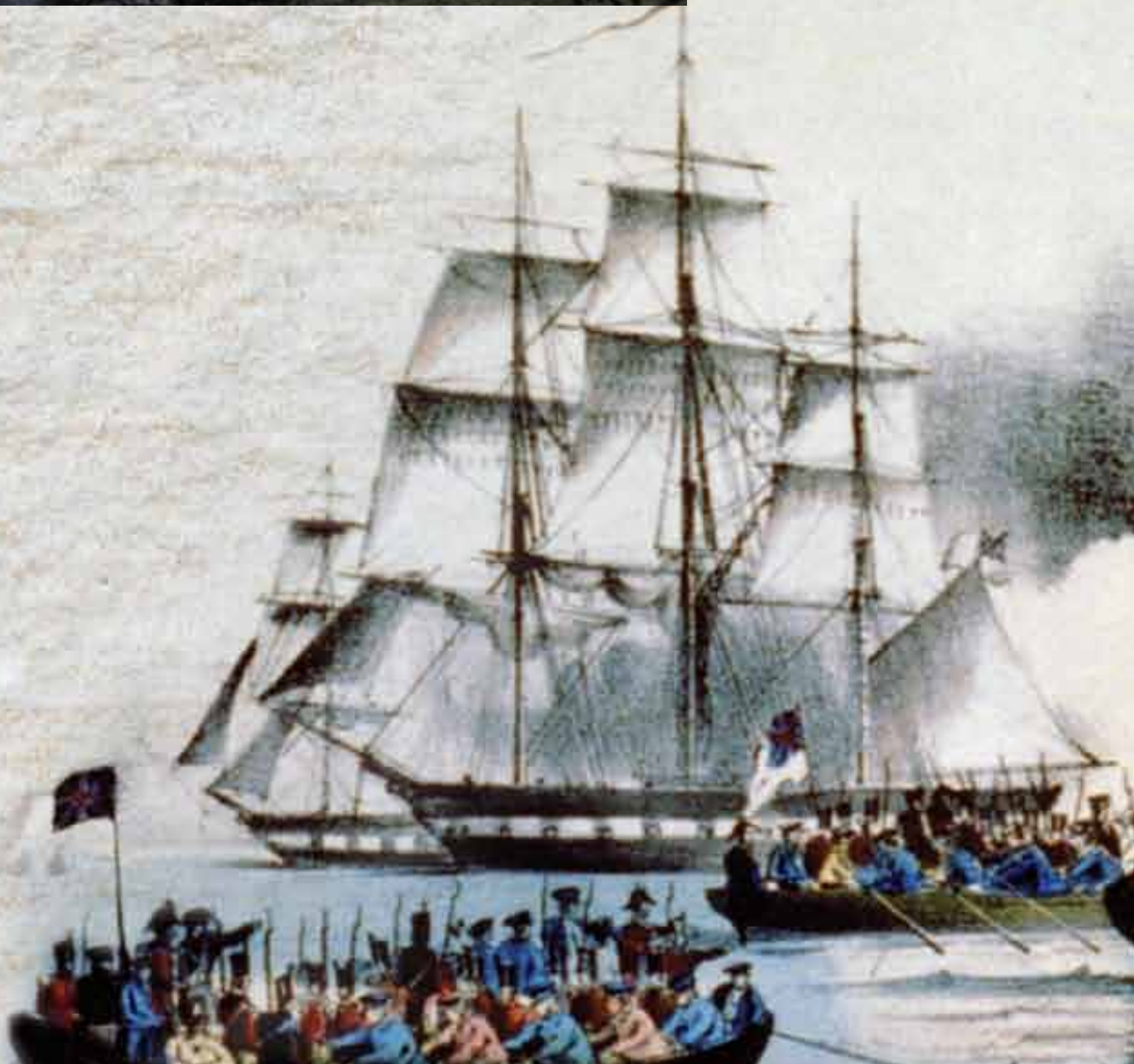
## Sailing the Spanish Main

European pirates and privateers operated everywhere European trading vessels sailed, particular hot spots being the Indian Ocean, the South China Sea, off Africa’s west coast, and in the Caribbean (known at the time as the Spanish Main). Early on in the European settlement of North America, the pope had declared Spanish all territory west of a line through the Atlantic Ocean, but other European countries, especially France and England, had no intention of giving up all that lucrative territory. Particularly after the disastrous loss of the Spanish Armada in 1588, Spain proved incapable of defending its Caribbean and North American lands from other European interlopers; all three European powers fielded privateers against the trading vessels of the other two as the balance of power shifted in the tropical waters. Privateers played a large role in several wars, in particular the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, but since 1907, international law has banned legalized piracy.



*Left: This drawing of pirates carrying their plunder was made by illustrator Howard Pyle. He popularized the modern image of pirate dress.*

*Below: English captain Robert Maynard captured the pirate Blackbeard, whose severed head was suspended from the bowsprit of Maynard’s sloop.*



*Opposite: The General Armstrong was an American brig built for privateering in the War of 1812. Involved in the Battle of Fayal (1814) against the British, the ship was scuttled by its captain. The Americans made it to shore, where they received protection from the Portuguese.*



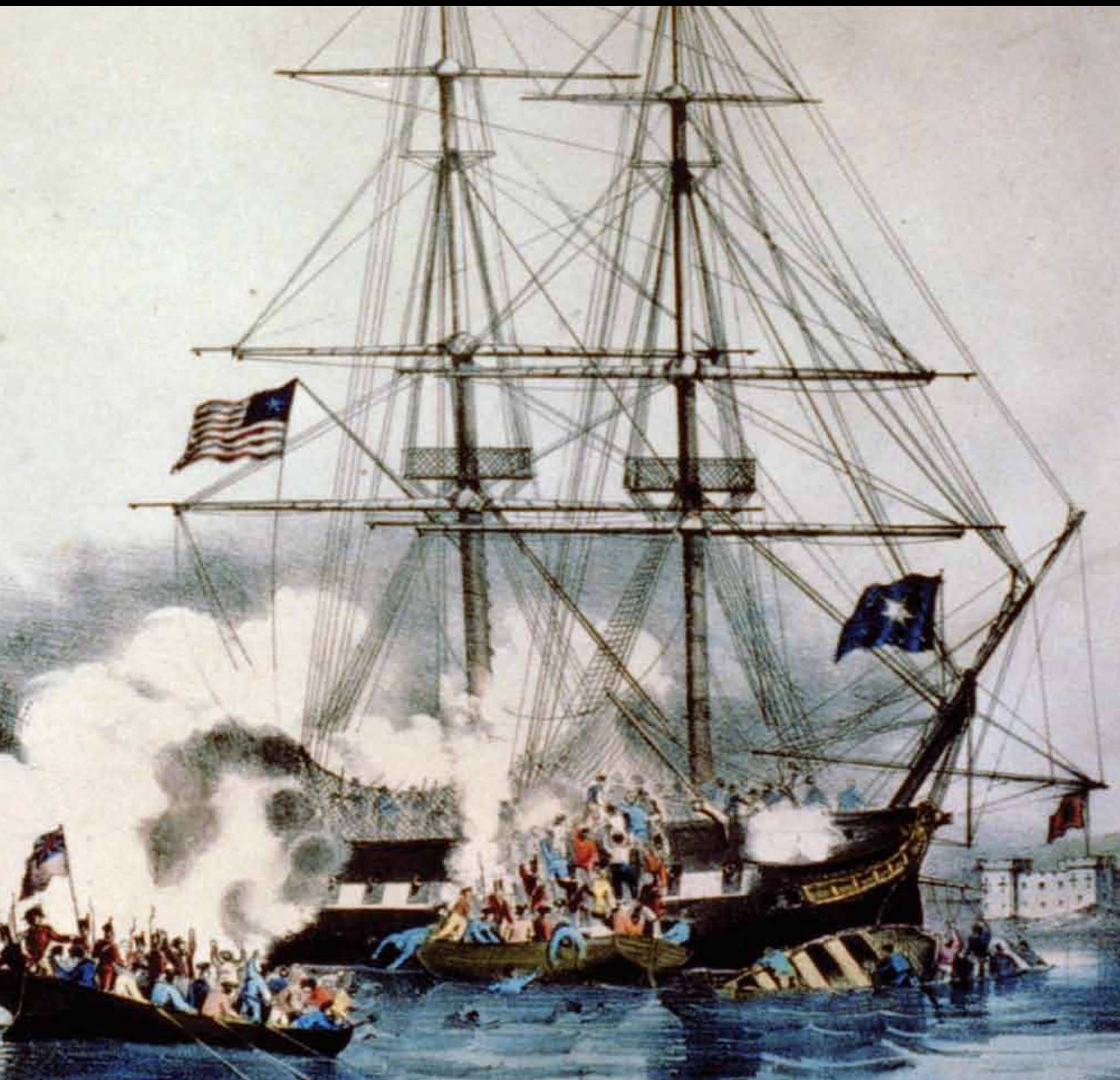
## PIRATES AND PRIVATEERS

The line between a pirate and a privateer was slim and easily crossed, a mere document being the distinguishing feature. In times of war, both European and American governments issued permissions to private ship owners to attack enemy ships and colonies. This eased the pressure placed on official navies. Privateering proved so profitable, however, that when peace was declared, many privateers simply turned pirate and continued. This, for example, was the career of one of history's most famous pirates, Blackbeard (born Edward Teach, Thatch, or Tache). A privateer for England during the War of Spanish Succession, he became a pirate, terrorizing the Caribbean and the Eastern Seaboard, especially the Carolinas, before meeting a bloody end at the hands of Lieutenant Robert Maynard of the Royal Navy, during a naval engagement in Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, in 1718.

## PLUNDER, PILOTS, AND PISTOLS

A pirate's primary weapon was also his primary prize: the ship. Successful pirate—or privateer—attacks depended first and foremost on speed, reconnaissance, and skillful piloting. Pirates had to choose their targets carefully, avoiding overwhelming forces, or worse, running into a naval patrol. Hunting and hiding on the high seas required a capable crew, not easily assembled out of the criminal element; mutiny was an ever-present danger for any pirate captain.

As a result, pirates generally favored speed and maneuverability over firepower and carried various types of weapons, in part because the guns of the period were often unreliable. The successful captain cultivated a reputation for bloodthirsty ruthlessness, which not only kept the crew in line but could also go a long way toward avoiding resistance from targeted merchant vessels—battle risked damage to both the pirate's ship and the precious prize. Besides the ship itself, pirate plunder typically included rum, sugar, cloth and other finished goods, and slaves—in other words, the very same goods that generated the “triangle trade” between Europe, Africa, and the Americas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.





# AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR

On April 19, 1775, bands of American militiamen clashed with British regular troops, called redcoats for their distinctive uniforms, as the latter attempted to seize arms and ammunition stored at Concord, Massachusetts. The Battles of Lexington and Concord forced the British to retreat to Boston, under fire all the way, and became what essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson famously called “the shot heard “round the world”—the opening salvo of the American Revolutionary War.

The American colonists had become increasingly incensed at their treatment by Great Britain’s Parliament and King George III. They were asked, among other things, to bear the brunt of the cost of prosecuting the French and Indian War and were also forced to buy heavily taxed British goods. Nevertheless, when war broke out in Massachusetts the thirteen colonies were still divided, uncertain whether violence was a wise course of action and unprepared to mount a full-scale war.



*The Continental Congress unanimously selected George Washington to be commander in chief of the Continental army in 1775. This hand-colored lithograph portraying the event was published by Currier & Ives around 1876.*

## Money Makes the World Go Round

Decades of war bled Britain’s coffers dry, despite its vast trading empire—a situation that not only helped provoke the Revolutionary War but also helped end it. Far more than any other insult, the taxes levied on the American colonists, who had no representation in the British Parliament, brought tempers to a fever pitch. The famous Boston Tea Party, in which revolutionaries tossed 342 chests of British tea into Boston Harbor on December 16, 1773, was a direct response to the Townshend Acts (1767) and the Tea Act (1773). By the time Lord Cornwallis, a generally victorious British general, surrendered to General Washington at Yorktown in 1781, Britain had simply run out of money. The patriots won the Revolutionary War as much by attrition of money as through attrition in lives.



*New Jersey as a colony saw more battles and skirmishes than any other; this map shows just a few of them.*

## A SEPARATE AND EQUAL STATION

The American revolutionaries, known as the patriots, should not have won the Revolutionary War. Perhaps only a third of the population fully supported the war effort, and the Continental army, commanded by General George Washington, was untrained, poorly supplied, and required payment that Washington struggled to provide. The British, on the other hand, manned one of the world’s best armies and sailed the finest navy. And in fact, the Americans won few major battles during the course of the war.

Washington soon discovered that he could not hope to best the British in battle, but he did win daring engagements at Trenton and Princeton (on December 26, 1776, and January 3, 1777), victories that were more important for morale than they were strategically. Washington’s genius, in fact, lay in holding his ragtag army together, despite multiple defeats and terrible conditions, most notably during the harsh winter of 1777–78, spent at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. After 1778, the redcoats moved south, where they expected to discover wellsprings of Loyalist support. Instead they found Nathanael Greene.

Greene, even more than Washington, realized that a patriot victory had to be won guerrilla-style, through a grinding war of attrition. As in the north, the redcoats won more battles outright, but even some of their victories—notably at Guilford Court House, fought on March 15, 1781, in North Carolina—were in effect defeats, for Greene caused such heavy casualties (not easily replaced over 3,000 miles of ocean) that he forced the British to retreat. Greene and Washington knew they had to hold on, strike at opportune moments, and flee rather than die honorably. Their tenacity, along with a surprising patriot victory at the Battle of Saratoga on October 7, 1777, convinced Spain, the Netherlands, and most important, France, to throw their lots in with the American patriots. French aid proved invaluable; not only did the rival European powers pin the British navy down at home, but French troops and guns also made the difference in the closing days of the war. At the Battle of Yorktown, 7,800 Frenchmen joined 9,000 Americans in ultimate victory. As Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence, the United States of America was born to a “separate and equal station” with Great Britain, its parent country.

Major Battles of the Revolutionary War			
Battle	Date	Location	Victor
Lexington and Concord	April 19, 1775	Lexington, MA; Concord, MA	American
Fort Ticonderoga	May 10, 1775	Ticonderoga, NY	American
Bunker Hill	June 17, 1775	Breed’s Hill, MA	British
Quebec	December 31, 1775	Quebec City, Canada	British
Long Island	August 27, 1776	Brooklyn Heights, NY	British
Fort Washington	November 16, 1776	Washington Heights, New York, NY	British
Trenton	December 26, 1776	Trenton, NJ	American
Princeton	January 3, 1777	Princeton, NJ	American
Brandywine	September 11, 1777	Chadds Ford, PA	British
Saratoga (1)	September 19, 1777	Saratoga, NY	British
Germantown	October 4, 1777	Germantown, PA	British
Saratoga (2)	October 7, 1777	Saratoga, NY	American
Monmouth	June 28, 1778	Monmouth, NJ	Inconclusive
Savannah	December 29, 1778	Savannah, GA	British
Charleston	March 29, 1780	Charleston, SC	British
Camden	August 18, 1780	Camden, SC	British
Kings Mountain	October 7, 1780	Blackburn, SC; Kings Mountain, NC	American
Cowpens	January 17, 1781	Cowpens, SC	American
Guilford Court House	March 15, 1781	Greensboro, NC	British
Yorktown	October 9, 1781	Yorktown, VA	American



# WAR OF 1812

During the Napoleonic Wars in Europe (see pages 92–93), Britain and France both enacted onerous decrees concerning the passage of neutral trading ships, each trying to deprive the other. These had major economic consequences for the merchants of the young United States of America, cut off from not one but two major trading partners. Americans also hated the British policy of impressment, by which Britain would seize sailors (British citizens in theory, but in fact often Americans) and force them to work on their ships. Distrust also ran hot among American frontiersmen, who suspected the British of fomenting Indian resistance to American expansion. Finally, in June 1812, the United States declared war on Britain.

## THE ROCKETS' RED GLARE

The War of 1812 ranged from British-controlled Canada to Louisiana, recently sold by France to the United States. The Battle of Tippecanoe, which pitted an Indian alliance led by Tecumseh, the charismatic Shawnee leader, against future American president William Henry Harrison, then governor of Indiana Territory, had already occurred. Yet, despite this early victory, the first years of the war did not go well for the Americans. An invasion of Canada by General William Hull in July of 1812 was deflected; Hull retreated and gave up the city of Detroit to British troops (and to Tecumseh, who had by now allied with the British) without firing a shot. On October 13, 1812, an American defeat at the Battle of Queenston Heights, in the present-day province of Ontario, ended the invasion.

The United States had more success in 1813. Victorious in April at York, a city they burned (it was renamed Toronto in 1834), U.S. forces held off the British siege of Fort Meigs in May, seized control of Lake Erie in a naval engagement on September 10, and killed Tecumseh in the Battle of the Thames, shattering his Indian alliance. The year ended, however, with a bad American defeat at the Battle of Crysler's Farm (November 11), aborting a second American invasion of Canada.

A third attempted invasion, in 1814, which had initial success at Chippawa, failed on July 25 at the Battle of Lundy's Lane. The United States would never again invade its northern neighbor. An American victory at the Battle of Plattsburg in September, however, prevented a British invasion of New

York, and secured the American-Canadian border. Meanwhile, although peace negotiations had already begun in Ghent (in modern-day Belgium), the British took revenge for the burning of York by sailing into Chesapeake Bay and torching Washington, D.C., forcing President James Madison to flee and scarring American morale. An American victory in September at Fort M'Henry during the Battle of Baltimore, however, convinced the British to withdraw to the Gulf of Mexico. This victory also inspired Francis Scott Key to compose "The Star-Spangled Banner," the national anthem of the United States.

## STATUS QUO ANTE BELLUM

The United States and Great Britain signed a peace treaty at Ghent on December 24, 1814, but one of the war's most famous battles had yet to come. Because it took many weeks for news to cross the Atlantic, the British invasion force in the Gulf of Mexico, unaware that peace had been declared, attacked New Orleans on January 8, 1815. The valiant defense against 7,500 British professionals by 6,000 American irregulars, commanded by another future president, General Andrew Jackson, became legendary. The victory gave Americans an illusion of having won the war; in fact, the Treaty of Ghent merely proclaimed *status quo ante bellum*, a return to the state of affairs before the war.



*During the War of 1812, the United States made three failed attempts to invade Canada. This map shows the primary area of conflict during the opening stages of the War of 1812, including many forts along the Canadian-US border. After the Battle of Lundy's Lane in 1814, the United States would never again invade its northern neighbor.*

## Andrew Jackson and the Indians

During the War of 1812, civil war broke out among the Creek Indians, one of the most powerful tribes of the southeast. At issue: whether to permit white settlers to live on Creek land. Those who disagreed were called Red Sticks, for the traditional Creek practice of painting their war-clubs red. The conflict went international on July 27, 1813, when Mississippi militiamen attacked a party of Red Sticks trading for weapons in Pensacola. The following month, Creek warriors surrounded and massacred the inhabitants of Fort Mims. The war came to a brutal close at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend on March 27, 1814, where General Jackson killed more Native American warriors than in any single battle in American history. The Creek nation was decimated, their lands—most of Alabama and part of Georgia—forfeited. Jackson, for his part, confirmed his distrust and dislike of American Indians, whom he fought again during the Seminole Wars. As president, he perpetrated one of the worst crimes on American Indians in the 1830s by forcibly relocating 100,000 southeastern tribes, especially the Cherokee, in what became known as the Trail of Tears; 15,000 died along the way.



*The Battle of New Orleans was the last major battle of the War of 1812. In this scene painted by Edward Percy Moran, General Andrew Jackson stands on the parapet of his makeshift defenses as his troops fight off their British attackers.*



# THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION

In 1789, the people of France rose up in revolt against King Louis XVI. The resulting confusion in France threw its colonies into states of alarm, disarray, and, in some places, armed conflict. In Haiti (then Saint-Domingue, the western third of Hispaniola), it helped precipitate thirteen years of civil, international, and revolutionary war.

Saint-Domingue was the jewel in France's imperial crown—its richest colony. Its wealth stemmed directly from the island's sugar and coffee plantations, for which tens of thousands of slaves were imported yearly, primarily from western Africa. In 1789 half a million slaves toiled on the island, while an upper class of whites and mulattoes (or *jaunes*, yellows), numbering about 56,000, slept “at the foot of Vesuvius,” in the famous words of the Comte de Mirabeau.



General Toussaint Louverture was deported to France, where he died in 1803.

## AT THE FOOT OF VESUVIUS

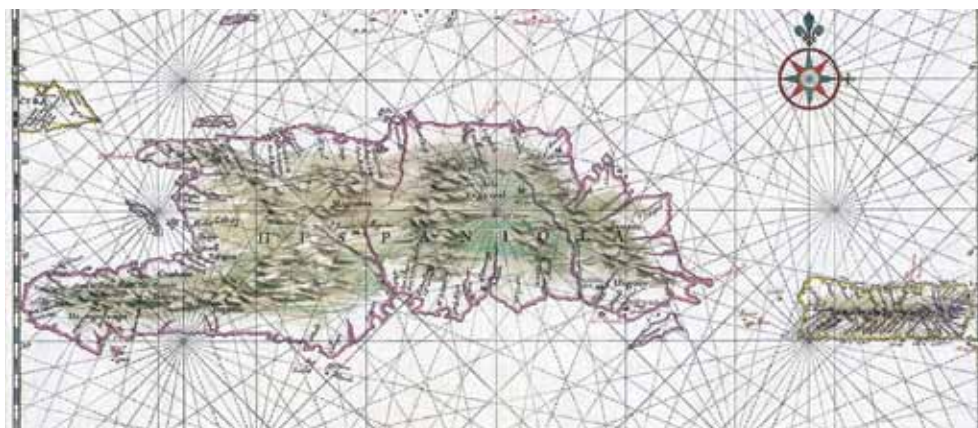
The start of the Haitian Revolution is typically dated to 1791, when large-scale slave rebellions first broke out, although rumblings of discontent began in 1789. Boukman Dutty's rebellion, the best organized of these, swept through the northern plain, burning 1,400 plantations and inspiring 40,000 slaves to rebel. The Spanish, in control of Santo Domingo, the eastern two-thirds of the island, supported the rebellion, hoping to weaken the French position and regain control of the entire island; the British came in on the side of the French monarchy. French Royalist and French Republican revolutionaries, Napoleonic troops after 1801, black slaves, mulattoes, whites, British, and Spaniards—all traded blows for thirteen tortuous years.

One particularly successful leader, Toussaint Louverture, briefly controlled the entire island, abolishing slavery before his imprisonment and deportation in 1802. A French general, Rochambeau, then committed such horrific massacres that the mulatto and black populations united against him. (The people were also motivated by news that Napoleon intended to reinstate slavery.) Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe joined forces to finally defeat the French at the Battle of Vertières on November 18, 1803. On January 1, 1804, Dessalines proclaimed the island's independence from France and renamed it Haiti, an ancient Arawak name.

Haiti was won at tremendous cost: half the population died, the economy lay in shambles, and Dessalines and Christophe soon fell out with each other, establishing competing governments, Christophe in the north and, in the south, Alexandre Pétion, Dessalines's successor after his assassination in 1806. Nor had racism been defeated: clear distinctions between minority mulattoes—Francophone, educated, Catholic—and blacks—Creole, illiterate, voodooist—created enduring divisions. Dessalines's massacre of nearly every remaining white man, one of his first acts of office, not only deprived the island of its desperately needed foreign trade contacts, but also denuded Haiti of nearly every professional. Haiti never industrialized and exhausted its soils by overfarming; as a result, the grand achievement of becoming the first independent Latin American country and the first black republic of the modern world has been buried beneath the crushing poverty the country still endures.



Above: In the 1804 Haiti Massacre, the entire white population of French Creoles was murdered by order of Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Between 3,000 and 5,000 people were killed.



Above: Once France's richest colony, Haiti is today one of the poorest countries in the world. It shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.



Left: This engraving shows the Battle of Vertières, in which the French were defeated by the Haitian rebels. It was the last major battle of the war.



# MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE

By the dawn of the nineteenth century, Spain's iron grip on its New World colonies was beginning to loosen. In Mexico ("New Spain"), a small minority of *peninsulares* (Spaniards born in Spain) ruled at the top of a rigid social, political, and economic hierarchy. Below them were Creoles (Spaniards born in Mexico), Mestizos (people of mixed blood), and, finally, pure-blood Native Indians. Spain's empire, weakened by centuries of war, was struck a fatal blow in 1808 when Napoleon Bonaparte of France occupied Spain and deposed the Bourbon king, sowing confusion and fear in Spanish territories across the globe.



*The Battle of Vera Cruz was an early example of French intervention in Mexico after it gained its independence.*



*Left: The painting highlights objects representing Mexico's independence. The new nation adopted the vertical tricolor flag of green, white, and red in 1821.*

*Above: The border between Mexico and the United States has shifted many times. Political instability and border disputes erupted after Mexico declared its independence. These conflicts led to the Mexican-American War, after which Mexico lost what is today California, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma. The current border was finalized in 1853 with the Gadsden Purchase.*

## THE CRY OF DOLORES

In Mexico, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla seized his opportunity. A Creole Catholic priest who had been exonerated of heresy by the Inquisition in 1800, Hidalgo, if not a heretic, was definitely a revolutionary, and on September 16, 1810, he famously rang the bell of Dolores—known as the *grito*, or “cry” of Dolores—as a summons to the poor people to arm themselves against the *peninsulares*.

Hidalgo's rough army, primarily composed of unarmed Indians and mestizo peasants, marched unopposed into Celaya and Valladolid, winning battles at Guanajuato, where it committed horrible acts of retaliation, and at Monte de las Cruces. Hidalgo established a rebel government at Guadalajara in November 1810, but his rebellion was already showing signs of exhaustion. The atrocities his rebels committed turned Creole support against him; some 40,000 of his untrained rabble deserted after Las Cruces. Spanish forces soon won at Aculco, Guanajuato (where they committed their own terrible reprisals), Calderón Bridge, and Guadalajara. Hidalgo was captured and executed by firing squad on July 30, 1811.

## REVOLUTION REDUX

Despite Hidalgo's death, the seed of revolution had sprouted, and another priest, José Maria Morelos y Pavón, soon took control of the movement. Escaping a siege of Cuautla in May 1812, Morelos proceeded to lead his forces to victory at Oaxaca (November 1812) and Acapulco (August 1813). He met defeat, however, at Valladolid (December 1813) and Puruarán (January 1814). In November 1815 Spanish forces captured him. He was executed in December.

Still, the revolution did not fade. Rebel forces carried on under Vincente Guerro, Francisco Javier Mina, and others. Then, in 1820, unrelated revolutionaries in Spain restored the monarchy, but insisted on a liberal constitution. This so alarmed conservative authorities in Mexico that formerly loyalist generals began switching sides. The most important of these, Agustín de Iturbide, joining forces with Guerro, rapidly threw out the remaining Spanish loyalists. On July 21, 1822, Iturbide declared himself emperor, sparking yet another revolution led by Antonio López de Santa Anna. Santa Anna's revolution began on December 6, 1822, in Veracruz; by July 19, 1824, Iturbide was dead. Mexico adopted a federalist constitution later that year.



# SOUTH AMERICAN WARS OF INDEPENDENCE

By the time Napoleon Bonaparte betrayed Spain, his erstwhile ally, in 1808, deposing the king and replacing him with Bonaparte's brother, discontent had already taken a firm hold in South America. Yet it was not until Napoleon conquered Spain that the colonies truly began to rise up. Juntas—military groups-cum-political rulers—took over Caracas and Quito in New Granada, Santiago in Peru, and Buenos Aires in Rio de la Plata: in all three Spanish viceroyalties, in other words. Spanish troops quickly defeated the juntas in the first three cities, but Buenos Aires proved stubbornly resistant. At first, the juntas proclaimed their loyalty to the deposed King Ferdinand, but Spain, acting on the authority of the Cortes regency, operating out of unconquered Cádiz, took umbrage at the predominantly Creole-dominated juntas and, in 1814, began sending forces to combat them.

## THE ROYALISTS' RETURN

Meanwhile, revolutionaries and royalists brought civil war to nearly every region of Spanish South America. The Buenos Aires junta tried three times to subdue the surrounding lands, the Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, without success. Upper Peru (Bolivia) proved especially intractable. Paraguay also repulsed Buenos Aires forces, but equally refused Spain, declaring independence from both in 1811. Uruguay, led by José Gervasio Artigas, broke away from Buenos Aires in 1815, leading a coalition called the Artigas Confederation against their former capital.

Spain, marginally recovered from the Napoleonic disaster, sent an increasing number of troops to reestablish its faltering control in South America. The Viceroyalty of Peru, with its capital at Lima, initially offered safe haven; from there, troops reconquered their former territory, with the exceptions of Buenos Aires and pieces of Rio de la Plata. Their control was far from secure, however, and in the south, they were about to face one of their worst revolutionary foes: José de San Martín (1778–1850).

Right: *Brazil achieved independence from Portugal in 1822, during the same period that Spanish colonies were shaking off colonialism.*



Below: *The Surrender at Bailén, by José Casado del Alisal, commemorates the decisive Spanish victory over the Imperial French Army in July 1808.*







Above: Translated as “the Admirable Alarm,” Grito de Asencio took place in Montevideo and marks the beginning of Uruguayan uprising against Spanish rule. This portrait by Carlos Maria Herrera is titled *La Mañana de Asencio*.



Above: Renowned Uruguayan painter Juan Manuel Blanes painted this portrait of José Gervasio Artigas, one of Uruguay’s most respected early patriots.



Above right: José de San Martín is a national hero of Argentina. He served as Peru’s first president.

### ACROSS THE ANDES

San Martín, formerly a Spanish professional soldier, rose quickly in the ranks to become a general of the Buenos Aires army. He considered the independence of his city at risk until the royalist Spaniards were dislodged from Lima. As early as 1813, San Martín began strategizing for an assault on that city—not through Upper Peru, which had proven inimical to the plans of Buenos Aires, but instead by linking up with Chile and attacking Lima from the water. This plan required some adjustment, for by the time San Martín set out from Mendoza in January of 1817, the royalists had reconquered Chile. The Argentine general was, therefore, obliged to navigate his way across the brutal Andes, outfoxing his royalist foes in a feat comparable to Hannibal’s. He spent the following year expelling royalists from Chile, establishing an ally as governor, and winning a final victory at the Battle of Maipú on April 5, 1818. With his Chilean allies, San Martín now made for Lima, establishing a loose siege around the city until the royalists retreated to the mountains.

Right: This scene represents the Battle of Boyacá, in which Colombia (then called New Granada) won independence from Spain. Rebel forces were led by General Simón Bolívar.



Below: Cabildo Abierto (*Open Cabildo*) shows a type of public assembly in which all citizens could take part. Common during the colonial period, they played a major role in the revolutions.





# SOUTH AMERICAN WARS OF INDEPENDENCE

## EL LIBERTADOR

As San Martín had liberated the south, so Simón Bolívar (1783–1830), the greatest revolutionary general of South America’s wars for independence, did the north. A Creole educated in Europe, Bolívar was gripped with the revolutionary fever that had already run its course in France and the United States. With visions of an independent “Gran Colombia” in his mind, he set out in 1813 with an avenging army from Tunja that swept across Venezuela, whose first republic had collapsed and which had since been overrun by royalists. He earned the name El Libertador, “the Liberator,” when he freed Caracas on August 6, 1813, but at the Battle of La Puerta the following year, Bolívar was defeated. As he fled to Jamaica, royalists reasserted a bloody control over Venezuela.

## A RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS

In 1817 Bolívar returned to Venezuela, where he established headquarters in Orinoco. Again he was defeated here, but now he made for Colombia (then another part of New Granada), with not more than about 2,500 men. He surprised the Spanish utterly, moving through terrain so treacherous the royalists had assumed it to be completely impassable, winning a brilliant victory at the Battle of Boyacá on August 7, 1819. With only thirteen revolutionaries’ lives lost, he secured the surrender of nearly the entire royal army and opened a clear route to Bogotá. By 1821 he had freed all of New Granada and, at last, Venezuela. In 1819 he became president of Gran Colombia.

Still, his military victories were not complete: Bolívar pushed through Ecuador to Guayaquil, where, after meeting San Martín in 1822, he picked up where San Martín left off, cleaning up royalist resistance in northern and Upper Peru. Two years of hard campaigning culminated in the celebrated Battle of Ayacucho, fought on December 9, 1824, where, although outnumbered, Bolívar managed to pull off a resounding defeat of the royalist Spanish forces. South America would face additional growing pains in the century ahead; ultimately, however, the triumph at Ayacucho led not only to Peruvian independence but also to independence for the continent as a whole.



Above: Located 60 miles east of Bogotá and crossing the Teatinos River, the Bridge of Boyacá commemorates the historic August 7, 1819, battle that secured independence for Colombia.



Above: One of the most influential politicians in the Americas, Bolívar led Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia to independence.



Above: Correo del Orinoco (the Orinoco Post) appeared from 1818 to 1822. It was a pro-revolutionary newspaper created by Bolívar.



Above: Bernardo O'Higgins, supreme director of the patriot forces, salutes San Martín after victory in the Battle of Maipú.

Right: The borders of the short-lived Gran Colombia corresponded more or less to the Viceroyalty of New Granada.



Timeline of Independence in South America							
1811	1816	1818	1819	1820	1824	1830	1838
Venezuela declares independence	Argentina declares independence	Chile declares independence	Colombia and Venezuela declare independence	Ecuador declares independence	Peru declares independence	Bolivia declares independence	Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica are established



# TEXAS REVOLUTION

The Alamo, located in the old Spanish city of San Antonio, Texas, is one of the most famous battle sites in the United States. Occurring at the height of the Texan Revolution, an affair whose brevity belies its significance in the history of North America, the one-sided battle at the former Spanish mission is famous for its heroic, doomed defense by American legends such as Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie.

## LONE STAR RISING

The first Anglo-American settlers arrived in Texas at the invitation of Spain, who sought frontiersmen to claim the Texan wilderness from the intractable Native Americans who lived there. At first, Mexico's war of independence failed to alter the situation. Few Mexicans wished to move to Texas, but an expanding population was needed to keep the Natives in line. Tensions soon grew, however, between the Anglo-Americans and the Mexicans, the result, among other factors, of numerous illegal American immigrants into Texas and Mexico's refusal to grant Texas statehood. After Santa Anna's rise to power, as the Mexican general slowly adopted dictatorial powers, Texas fretted at the loss of its constitutionally granted rights.

Armed incidents between Texans and Mexican authorities occurred as early as 1826, but the first shots of the Texas Revolution proper were not fired until October 2, 1836. The Battle of Gonzales broke out when the Mexican military commander of Texas, Domingo de Ugartechea, demanded that the citizens return a loaned cannon. The citizens—alarmed by Santa Anna's brutal repression of dissidents in Zacatecas in May, and angered by the arrest of one of Texas's leading figures, Stephen F. Austin—refused. The Texans forced the Mexican troops, sent to retrieve the cannon, to withdraw. In the remaining months of 1835, the Texans scored several more victories, losing only one man (to Mexico's sixty) at the Battle of Concepción and seizing two of the most significant Texan cities, San Antonio and Goliad.

## "REMEMBER THE ALAMO!"

The year 1835 ended well for the ragtag Texan army, a motley collection of untrained volunteers. But the war was not over, the Texans were dispersing, and now Santa Anna himself was on the march, determined to crush the rebellion. The revolutionaries declared Texas independent on March 2, 1836, placing the Tennessee-born, Cherokee-by-adoption Sam Houston in charge of their armed forces. Houston faced 8,000 Mexican regulars with fewer than 4,000 volunteers (sometimes considerably less, as his numbers fluctuated unpredictably), and 1836 did not get off to a good start.

Santa Anna made straight for the lightly defended Alamo. Arriving on February 23, 1836, he attacked with at least 1,100 men; the Texan defenders numbered fewer than 200. A thirteen-day siege ended with the death of every armed defender. Santa Anna intended his Alamo action to be punitive; instead, it only stiffened the revolutionaries' resolve. Meanwhile, a second Mexican force surprised Texas with swift victories at San Patricio, Agua Dulce Creek, and Goliad.

Houston, calmly deliberative, began a long, easterly retreat, stopping at a plantation on the Brazos River. He had less than two weeks, during which he instilled rudimentary military training into his remaining 800-man army, before Santa Anna reached the area. The two armies raced to Lynch's Ferry. The Texans arrived first, but Santa Anna, with 1,300 trained troops, relaxed. If Houston had been steady and deliberative before, he now acted as swiftly—and as recklessly—as the roughest frontiersman. Though outnumbered, he attacked. Cries of "Remember the Alamo!" echoed across the battlefield; the Texans lost nine soldiers, but the Mexicans, caught completely by surprise, were, to a man, captured, routed, or killed. With the capture of Santa Anna himself, Texas became an independent nation.

Right: *Raised in east Tennessee, Davy Crockett, "King of the Wild Frontier," served in the House of Representatives before heading west to Texas to raise a company of volunteers.*

Below left: *At the old mission chapel known as the Alamo an estimated 1,000 to 1,600 Mexican soldiers died in battle; all 189 Texans were killed.*

Below right: *Sam Houston was elected president of the Republic of Texas and later U.S. senator from Texas. He refused to swear loyalty to the Confederacy when Texas seceded, and was removed.*



Above: *The Republic of Texas was an independent nation from 1836 to 1846. Its capital was at Columbia, Houston, and finally Austin, which remains the state capital.*



# MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR

Great Britain, eyeing the rapid development of its former colonies with some bemusement, favored an independent Texas as a stopgap to the westward expansion of the United States. But when Texas finally achieved statehood in June 1845, having first applied in 1836, it was Mexico, not Britain, that went to war with the United States. The Mexican-American War, the first international war fought by the United States that didn't involve Great Britain, ended with the annexation not only of Texas but also of the entire American southwest as far as the Pacific Ocean—in all, some 500,000 square miles.

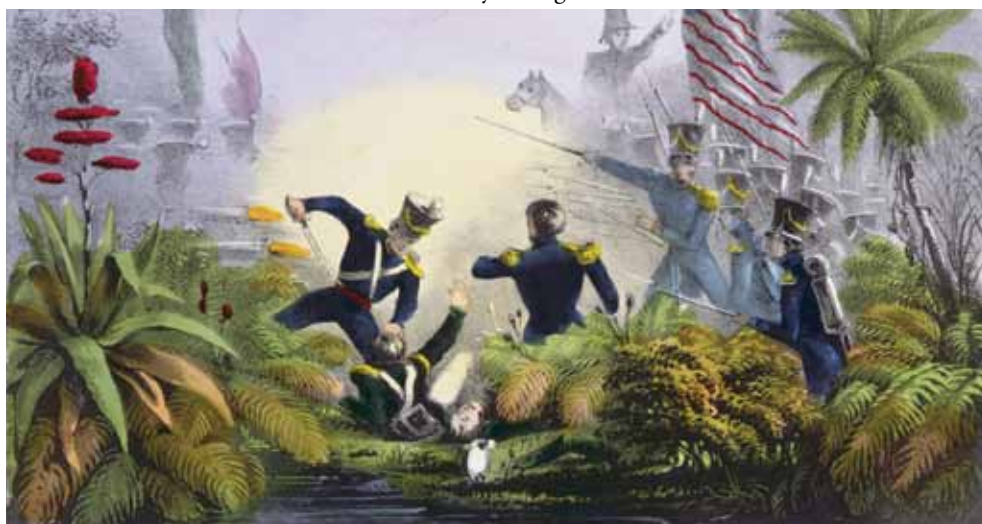
## Manifest Destiny

In 1845, the same year the first troops arrived in the contested border region, an American columnist, John L. O'Sullivan, coined the phrase "Manifest Destiny," a phrase connoting the rather grandiose notion that God had somehow intended the whole of North America to be governed by white American men. Largely unconcerned with Native claims on western territories, and inspired especially by the discovery of gold in California and other western places, white settlers and immigrants seized "Manifest Destiny" as their divine imperative, flooding west during the second half of the nineteenth century—a flood significantly hastened by the Mexican territories ceded after the war.



Above: General Winfield Scott at the battle of Veracruz

Below: In the Battle of Cerro Gordo, U.S. troops outflanked larger Mexican forces.



## THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR

Mexico, which cared little for Texas after the Texas Revolution, nevertheless objected strenuously to the territory's annexation by the United States—even more so when the United States placed the Texas border at the Rio Grande instead of at the Nueces River, a hundred miles farther north. War broke out after the Mexican government snubbed an American envoy sent to resolve the dispute; in early 1846 both the American and Mexican governments sent armies into the disputed border region between the Nueces and the Rio Grande.

American president James K. Polk organized a three-pronged assault on Mexican territory. The northernmost army, commanded by Colonel Stephen Kearny, marched from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, into New Mexico and California, where American settlers briefly declared an independent nation before accepting entry into the United States. With the occupation of Monterey, California, in July 1846, and victories at San Pasqual (December 1846) and Los Angeles (January 1847), New Mexico and Upper California fell to the United States.

Meanwhile, future president General Zachary Taylor and General Winfield Scott struck at Mexico proper. Taylor, having crossed the Nueces in March of 1846, engaged the Mexican army in early May at the Battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, forcing the Mexicans across the Rio Grande. He pursued them to Monterey, where he won a hard-fought battle, and won another victory in February 1847 at the Battle of Buena Vista, in which Taylor's 5,000 men were outnumbered three to one.

One month before, General Scott had taken his army by sea, landing in the important port of Veracruz in mid-March, seizing the city after a two-week siege. Then, taking much the same route as Hernán Cortés three centuries earlier, Scott struck out for Mexico City. Like Taylor, Scott overcame enormous numerical differences—at the Battle of Cerro Gordo, his 8,500 men faced 12,000 Mexicans—and entered the Mexican capital on September 14, 1847. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed on February 2, 1848, ended the war. For \$15 million, the American government took control of all Mexican territory north of the Rio Grande; in 1853 the United States bought the Gadsden Purchase, land now in southern Arizona and New Mexico, finally setting the 2,000-mile border.



Above: The land ceded by Mexico to the United States in 1848 equaled one third of its prewar territory.



Above: James Polk, a dark horse candidate elected to the Democratic ticket on the ninth ballot, was the last of the Jacksonians to sit in the White House. In favor of American expansion, he was committed to the nation's Manifest Destiny.



The terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo were largely dictated by the United States to occupied Mexico.



# AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

In December 1861, South Carolina took the extraordinary step of seceding from the United States of America. Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas followed shortly after, with Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia seceding a few months later. (West Virginia, forming a separate state, pulled away in 1863.) By then, the first shots of the American Civil War had been fired; on April 12 Federal troops had surrendered Fort Sumter near Charleston, South Carolina.

The issue rending the nation's heart in two was slavery, the bedrock of the South's economy. Some three million slaves—a third of the South's population—toiled on cotton, tobacco, and other crop plantations, and with the election of Abraham Lincoln it seemed possible that abolitionist Republicans—who also controlled Congress—would abolish that “peculiar institution.” Rather than give up what they considered their rightful property, their way of life, and the right to determine their own path, the Southern states broke away, forming the Confederate States of America.



*This 1864 portrait of President Lincoln was taken by Mathew Brady, the most acclaimed photographer of the Civil War. Originally specializing in portraits, Brady's graphic battle images brought home the terrible reality of war.*

## THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

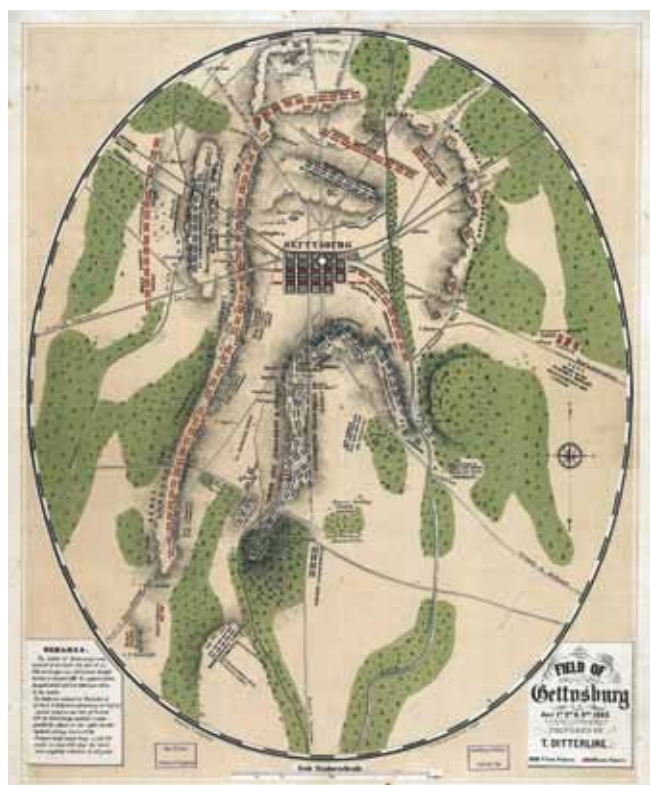
President Lincoln, advised that the South would fold after a defeat or two, sent his blue-clad troops to the First Battle of Bull Run, but the gray-uniformed Confederates bested the poorly trained Union soldiers, chasing them all the way to Washington, D.C. The Union, particularly in the eastern theater, suffered for the first half of the war from several factors, the most destructive of which was poor leadership. General George McClellan commanded the army after Bull Run, but his arrogance was by no means matched by his capability. After stalling for many months, McClellan struck toward Richmond, Virginia, the Confederate capital, where he was outmatched by General Robert E. Lee, one of the best and most respected military minds in American history.

Lincoln, fed up with McClellan, replaced him with John Pope, but Pope fared no better, losing badly to Generals Lee and Thomas Jackson—ever after called “Stonewall”—at the Second Battle of Bull Run, on August 29–30, 1862. Pressing his advantage, Jackson then won decisively at Harpers Ferry; the best McClellan could do (he was now returned to command) was earn a draw against Lee at Antietam, with more than 26,000 casualties, the bloodiest day in American military history—even though McClellan had been given a copy of Lee's plans.

## “HE FIGHTS”

Meanwhile, in western Tennessee, a hitherto unknown Union general named Ulysses S. Grant had successfully seized Forts Henry and Donelson and broken the South's only east-west railroad at Muscle Shoals, Alabama. In April 1862, Grant, reinforced by General Carlos Buell, staved off a determined Confederate assault at Shiloh, one of the war's most famous battles. Shiloh, where 24,000 died, was a brutal lesson for both sides, surpassed only by Antietam. The obvious Union strategy now would be to seize the Mississippi River, march through Tennessee, and strike at Georgia, the South's economic heart. Unfortunately, however, Grant's superiors lacked the requisite vision or inclination. Lincoln would later recognize Grant's worthiness, promoting him to the army's command. “I can't spare this man; he fights,” the president famously remarked.

*Below: The Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg in the South) took place near Antietam Creek. It was the first major battle fought on Union soil.*



*Above: This image of the Second Battle of Bull Run (Second Manassas) shows Stonewall Jackson's entrenched troops. The battle was a decisive win for the South.*



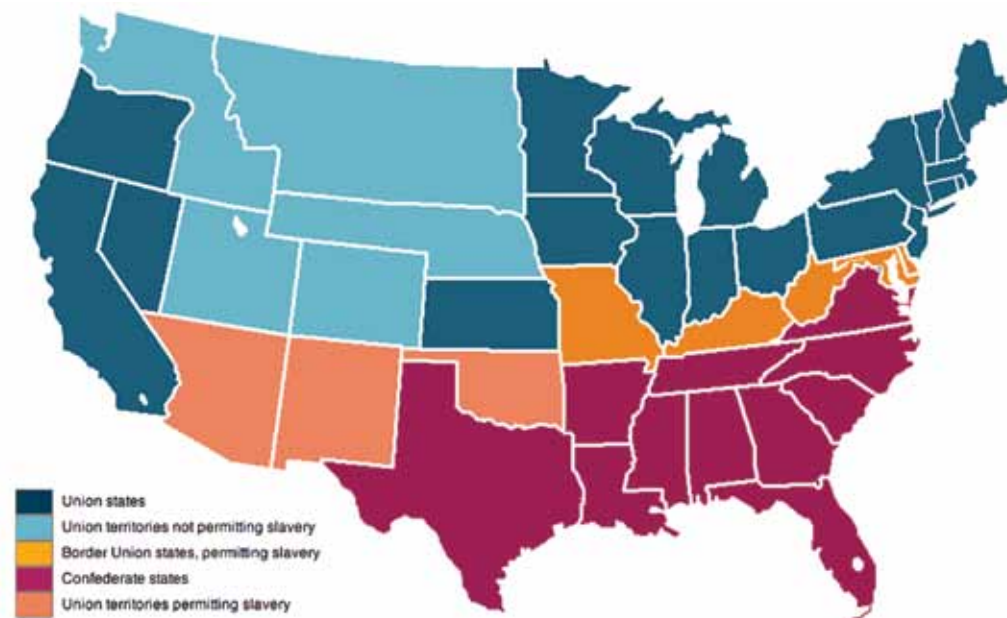
*Above: A career soldier, Grant graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point. After the war, he served two terms as eighteenth president of the United States.*



*Left: In 1861 the president imposed a blockade on Confederate ports. Initially the blockade was very weak, but it became increasingly effective as the war progressed.*

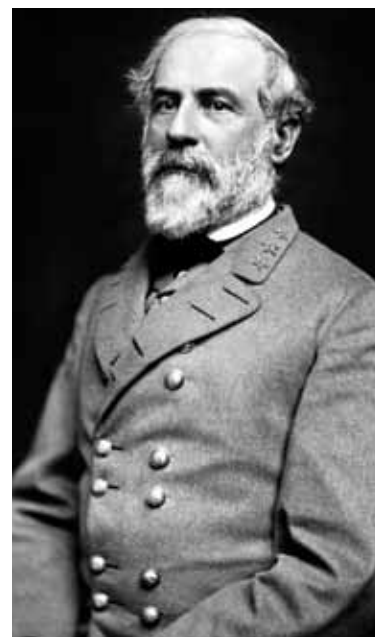


## AMERICAN CIVIL WAR



Left: In yellow are the “border states” of Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri. All were slave states, but none seceded. West Virginia broke away from Virginia.

Right: When his home state of Virginia seceded, Robert E. Lee chose to fight for the South, even though President Lincoln had offered him command of the Union army.

**Damn the Torpedoes!**

The Civil War ushered in a new age of naval warfare. Although neither the Confederacy nor the Union was the first to build an ironclad (as opposed to a wooden) warship—France’s *Gloire*, built in 1859, takes that honor—the Battle of Fort Henry saw the first ironclads in action against enemy ships. More famous was the four-hour duel between the Confederate CSS *Virginia* and the Union USS *Monitor* in the Battle of Hampton Roads on March 9, 1862, which marked the first time enemy ironclads faced each other in battle: the result, anticlimactically, was a standoff.

Few of the war’s best-known battles were naval, but ironclad technology played its part in winning the war. At the Battle of Mobile Bay (August 2–23, 1864), Union admiral David Farragut struggled to seize Mobile, the most significant remaining Confederate port. The attack stalled; the admiral, from the deck of his flagship, asked why. “Torpedoes!” came the response. “Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!” Farragut is said to have replied. The Union ships plowed through.

**THE LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION**

On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation: never again would slavery be legal in the United States. But the war was far from over: Stonewall Jackson smashed Union general Joseph Hooker’s forces at the Battle of Chancellorsville on April 27, 1863; Lee, winning at Winchester, Virginia, on June 13, pressed north. Forced by his supervisors to take a stand, Hooker engaged Lee in a small town in southern Pennsylvania.

Valiant attacks and heroic defenses resulted in 23,000 Union casualties and about as many for the Confederates during the horrific three-day battle at Gettysburg. Although Lee’s bold invasion nearly broke the back of the Union, he retreated after a last desperate assault on Cemetery Ridge.

**WAR IS HELL**

Still the war would not end. In the west, Grant brilliantly maneuvered around Vicksburg, securing its surrender on July 4, 1863. Despite a dreadful Union defeat at Chickamauga, Grant lifted a Confederate siege at Chattanooga and prepared for an all-out, multipronged attack on the South.

Three of Grant’s five prongs failed outright, and Grant himself—head-to-head with Lee in a brutal series of battles from May to June 1864—bloodied but could not beat the Confederate general. General Philip Sheridan, however, drove through the Shenandoah Valley, a grim echo of General William T. Sherman’s more famous successes in Georgia and the Carolinas. Besting the Confederate defenders of Atlanta, Sherman proceeded on his “March to the Sea,” burning and pillaging all the way to Savannah, Columbia, and Raleigh. He meant to break Southern morale, and he succeeded, although it is unlikely he ever actually voiced the phrase typically attributed to him, “War is hell!”

**A HOUSE DIVIDED**

Finally, at the Battle of Five Forks, near Petersburg, Virginia, the Union Army of the Potomac achieved its first offensive victory of the war. Lee fled to Appomattox Court House, where Sheridan and Grant surrounded him. Lee had no choice but to surrender: the South had fallen.

The Union’s victory came at a terrible cost, not only in lives lost—more Americans died in the Civil War than in all the other wars in which they fought combined, until the end of Vietnam—but also in economic and emotional terms, terms that have not, perhaps, yet been wholly resolved. The brutalized South did not begin to recover economically until after World War II; African Americans did not achieve true political equality until the 1960s; cultural resentments continue to simmer on both sides. In military terms, the Civil War marked an important transition into modern warfare; sadly, the bloody lessons learned on America’s fields, in its forests, and in its towns would shortly be reprised elsewhere.



Above: Appomattox Manor, a former plantation in Virginia, was Union headquarters in the Siege of Petersburg. Lee surrendered to Grant on Palm Sunday, 1865 at Appomattox Court House.



Above: Confederates lie dead after the Battle of Chancellorsville. Stonewall Jackson died by friendly fire in the battle, a loss Lee likened to “losing my right arm.”

Right: Both sides wanted control of Chattanooga, “Gateway to the Deep South.” Confederates won at nearby Chickamauga, but Union troops eventually took the city.







**Sic Semper Tyrannis**

For everyone but President Abraham Lincoln, the war ended on April 9, 1865. The six-foot-tall president—America’s tallest to date—had delivered on his oath to “preserve, protect, and defend” the government of the United States. But among the “dissatisfied” citizens, to whom he had referred in his first inaugural address, there was one unbalanced actor, John Wilkes Booth. Booth, unwilling to accept the defeat of the South, assassinated President Lincoln on April 14, 1865, at Ford’s Theatre in Washington, D.C., declaiming Virginia’s state motto, *Sic Semper Tyrannis*—“thus always to tyrants”—to Lincoln’s shocked theater companions. Booth intended to reinvigorate the secessionists’ cause; instead, the first assassination of an American president horrified leading figures of the South and actually enhanced Lincoln’s reputation.

Above: *Abraham Lincoln confers with his commanders aboard Grant’s floating headquarters on the River Queen. From left: Generals Sherman and Grant, Lincoln, and General Porter.*

Below: *This scene from a cyclorama depicts the Battle of Atlanta (July 22, 1864). John Bell Hood’s forces unsuccessfully attacked troops led by General Sherman.*



Above: *The Fifteenth Amendment ensured a citizen’s right to vote regardless of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”*



Left: *After the Civil War, the United States rapidly admitted new states. By 1912 there were forty-eight states.*

Major Battles of the Civil War			
Battle	Date	Location	Victor
Fort Sumter	April 12, 1861	Fort Sumter, SC	Confederate
First Battle of Bull Run	July 21, 1861	Manassas, VA	Confederate
Fort Donelson	February 11–16, 1862	Fort Donelson, TN	Union
Hampton Roads	March 9, 1862	Hampton Roads, VA	Inconclusive
Shiloh	April 6–7, 1862	Shiloh, TN	Union
New Orleans	April 25–May 1, 1862	New Orleans, LA	Union
First Battle of Winchester	May 25, 1862	Winchester, VA	Confederate
Seven Days Battles	June 25–July 1, 1862	Virginia Peninsula	Confederate
Second Battle of Bull Run	August 29–30, 1862	Manassas, VA	Confederate
Harpers Ferry	September 12–15, 1862	Harpers Ferry, VA (now WV)	Confederate
Antietam	September 17, 1862	Antietam, MD	Inconclusive
First Battle of Fredericksburg	December 13, 1862	Fredericksburg, VA	Confederate
Chancellorsville	April 30–May 6, 1863	Chancellorsville, VA	Confederate
Second Battle of Fredericksburg	May 3, 1863	Fredericksburg, VA	Union
Siege of Vicksburg	May 18–July 4, 1863	Vicksburg, MI	Union
Gettysburg	July 1–3, 1863	Gettysburg, PA	Union
Chickamauga	September 19, 1863	Chickamauga, GA	Confederate
Chattanooga	November 23–25, 1863	Chattanooga, TN	Union
Wilderness	May 5–7, 1864	North-central VA	Inconclusive
Spotsylvania Courthouse	May 8–21, 1864	Spotsylvania Courthouse, VA	Inconclusive
Cold Harbor	May 31–June 12, 1864	Cold Harbor, VA	Confederate
Second Battle of Petersburg	June 15–18, 1864	Petersburg, VA	Tactically Confederate
Mobile Bay	August 2–23, 1864	Mobile Bay, AL	Union
Jonesborough	August 31–September 1, 1864	Near Atlanta, GA	Union
Nashville	December 15–16, 1864	Nashville, TN	Union
Five Forks	April 1, 1865	Near Petersburg, VA	Union
Appomattox Court House	April 9, 1865	Appomattox, VA	Union



# SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

While it had taken Spain hundreds of years to establish a global empire, it took just four months for it to lose its few remaining overseas possessions to a growing rival: the United States. Although generally suspicious of imperialism, having forcefully rejected an empire during its formation (see the Revolutionary War, page 294), the United States had, as early as 1823, asserted its interests in Central and South America with the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine. Although this document explicitly protected existing European colonies, Americans became ever more sympathetic to revolutionary causes as the cry for independence rose triumphantly through Latin America. Thus, when Cuba began clamoring for independence in 1868, Americans began clamoring as well.



*Although the Rough Riders were cavalry, many fought as infantrymen.*

## The Rough Riders

Perhaps most famous of all the American army units, the 1st Volunteer Cavalry—better known as the Rough Riders—had just one quality in common: they were all exquisite equestrians. Otherwise, they shared little, hailing from Boston to the Western frontier, elite college students joining frontier lawmen, politicians' sons rubbing elbows with cowboys. Though commanded by Colonel Leonard Wood, the most famous Rough Rider and primary recruiter was Theodore Roosevelt, former assistant secretary of the navy. The Riders were brash, unorthodox, and talented, and generated more publicity than any other unit in the war. Their crowning achievement came in the war's ultimate battle at Santiago, when, after they had helped capture El Caney and Kettle Hill, heavily defended positions near Santiago, they rushed to the aid of army units struggling to take San Juan Ridge, whose heights offered the last best defense of the city. The Rough Riders' popularity placed Theodore Roosevelt squarely in the public's adoring eye; he became America's twenty-sixth president in 1901.

## THE YELLOW SPECTER

Anger at Spain escalated in the United States through the 1890s, thanks in part to reports that up to 200,000 Cuban revolutionaries died of starvation and neglect in Spanish prisons. In 1895, the Cuban revolution gathered steam; by the end of the year, American president Grover Cleveland warned Spain that the United States might step in if the crisis did not resolve quickly. Then, on February 15, 1898, the USS *Maine* exploded and sank in Havana Harbor, carrying 288 American sailors to the depths. The cause of the explosion has never been established with certainty, but American newspapers—especially in New York City, where moguls William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer were engaged in a fierce circulation war—excoriated Spain for attacking the American battleship. “Yellow journalism”—frenzied, biased journalistic reports—drove American rage to fever pitch. In April the United States and Spain declared war.



By July, 22,000 Americans and Cubans were arrayed against 8,000 Spanish, winning quick victories at El Viso Fort, El Caney, San Juan Heights, San Juan Hill, and Aguadores Fort. On July 3 the Americans won a resounding victory, destroying every ship in the Spanish fleet as it tried to leave Santiago Bay. Although the Treaty of Paris, which concluded the war and released Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines from Spanish rule, was not signed until December, the war truly ended when the last Spanish ship sank in the waters formerly known as the Spanish Main. The brief war brought European colonialism in the Americas to an end; American ambassador John Hay, writing from London, declared the affair “a splendid little war.”

*Left: Four African American regiments served in the war; two alongside the Rough Riders.*

*Below: “Remember the Maine; to hell with Spain” became a rallying cry of the war.*

## A SPLENDID LITTLE WAR

As Commodore George Dewey seized the Philippines in the Pacific (see page 287), a makeshift, volunteer American army sailed for Cuba. Meanwhile, Cuban revolutionaries seized Jiguani, Baire, Santa Rita, and Bayamo, where General Calixto Garcia established headquarters. In April, Cubans also attacked Spanish positions at San Luis, Palma Soriano, Mao, and Alto Songo; the American navy bombarded Matanzas and Cienfuegos Bays. An American landing at Pinar del Rio, however, was repulsed. Spain assembled its forces in Santiago, blockaded in late May by the U.S. Navy. Cuban forces slowly fought their way toward this base; in June, the American army began landing.

Philippines



*Left: As assistant secretary of the navy, future president Theodore Roosevelt was an aggressive supporter of a war with Spain over Cuba.*

*Right: Secretary of State John Hay signing the 1898 Treaty of Paris, which gave the United States temporary control of Cuba.*





# CUBAN REVOLUTION

By 1953 Colonel Fulgencio Batista had controlled Cuba, either through shadow governments or as president, for nineteen years, a period that was generally prosperous, thanks in large part to Havana's disreputable reputation as the "Latin Las Vegas." Known as a place of gambling and brothels, with lucrative associations between businessmen and organized crime, the country was seen as a kind of tropical playhouse for wealthy and unscrupulous Americans. In the countryside, however, poverty gripped the sugarcane growers. Increasingly, land was being bought by Americans and other foreigners, not by Cubans. Rumblings of dissent began to be heard.



Left: A U-2 plane shot photo evidence of several Soviet launch sites in Cuba, such as this one at San Cristobal.

## The Cuban Missile Crisis

On October 14, 1962, American spy planes, confirming the world's worst fears, discovered that Soviet operatives were building launch pads for ballistic missiles in Cuba. The ensuing two weeks of tension, known as the Cuban Missile Crisis, were probably the worst of the entire Cold War—in essence, a game of "nuclear chicken" that could have quickly turned the Cold War very hot indeed. Neither President Kennedy nor Soviet chairman Nikita Khrushchev wanted nuclear war, but neither could afford to back down without concessions from the other. The United States blockaded Cuba while Kennedy and Khrushchev maneuvered diplomatically. On October 28 they agreed: if the United States pledged not to invade Cuba, the Soviet missiles would be removed. Americans breathed a sigh of relief, but the Soviets, perceiving the results to be an insult, began a massive arms-building program whose fruits, now dispersed across the globe, still trouble the world today.



Above: Colonel Batista rose to power in a 1933 coup. After he was ousted as dictator he lived in exile in Portugal.

Below: In this cartoon titled "School Begins," Uncle Sam teaches unwilling pupils from the Philippines, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Cuba.



## THE 26TH OF JULY

On July 26, 1953, an idealistic revolutionary named Fidel Castro led 134 of his followers in a suicidal attack on the garrison stationed at the Moncada military base in Santiago. He expected the attack to fail, which it did, and as a consequence the peasants to rise up, which they did not. At his trial, however, Castro delivered an impassioned speech, later published as "History Will Absolve Me," which generated popular support, even as he began serving a fifteen-year prison sentence. Released in 1955 under an amnesty for political prisoners, Castro removed himself to Mexico to organize his next attack on Batista. This second attempt went no better than his first, however. Landing at Playa Las Coloradas on December 2, 1956—in a yacht rather unsuitably named *Granma*, "grandmother"—Castro, heading for the Sierra Maestra mountains, was ambushed by Batista's forces in Alegria del Pío, near Niquero.

Of the tiny eighty-two-man invasion force, only about twenty escaped into the Sierra Maestras, but these included Castro's brother Raúl, the Argentine revolutionary Che Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos, and Castro himself. These four became the leaders of a guerrilla movement, called the 26th of July in commemoration of the attack on Moncada. For the next two years they operated out of the Sierra Maestras. Incredibly, they not only evaded capture, but they also managed to defeat much larger, better-equipped, and better-trained military forces while moving westward across the island. Success bred success, as more and more revolutionaries joined their cause. Finally, after the city of Santa Clara fell to the rebels on December 31, 1958, Batista fled. Havana and Santiago surrendered: Cuba was Castro's.

## EVER FAITHFUL

More than merely replacing one government with another, the revolution dramatically altered the course of Cuban history and, in a real sense, the global map. Castro nationalized industries and agriculture, restructured political and social structures, and had, by 1960, seized about a billion dollars of American property. Already on the left end of the political spectrum, Castro adhered ever more closely to the communist Soviet Union, as the United States pulled away from the island the Spanish had once called their "ever faithful" colony. Cuba's alignment with the Soviets panicked the United States, then at the height of the Cold War. Suddenly the Soviets had a launching pad—literally—in America's backyard. In April of 1961, President John F. Kennedy sent 1,500 Cuban exiles, former Batista supporters trained by the United States Central Intelligence Agency, to invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. The invasion was a fiasco; the force was immediately overwhelmed. Although no missile was ever launched from Cuba, and the Soviet Union crumbled in late 1980s, the Cuban and American relationship remains badly strained.

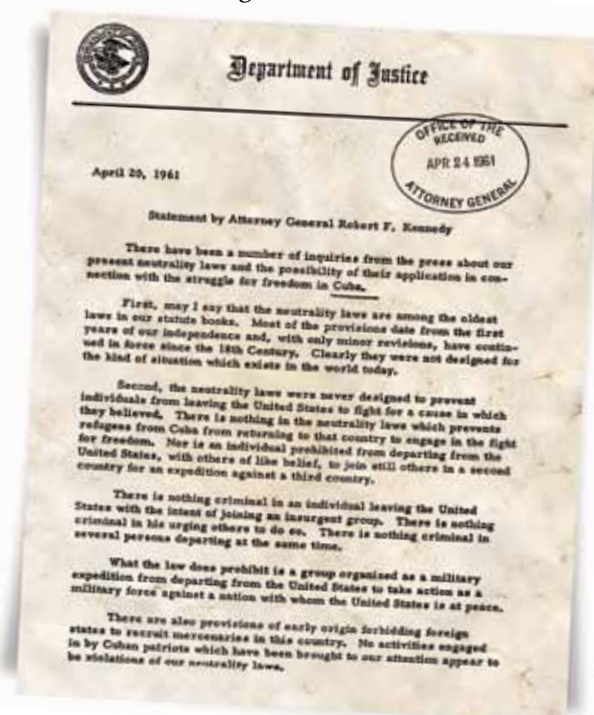


After a failed attempt to foment revolution in Bolivia, Che Guevara was captured and executed.

## The Falklands War

The British Empire once laid claim to territories around the world, but by the late twentieth century nearly all of Britain's former colonies were independent nations. One small scrap remained to Britain in the distant South Atlantic, however: the Falkland Islands, off the coast of Argentina. On April 2, 1982, Argentina invaded the islands, incorrectly assuming that Britain and its prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, would be unwilling to contest it. This proved a costly error, for within hours of the invasion the British Parliament had dispatched a task force. One month and 8,000 miles later, the climax of war came when British submarine HMS Conqueror sank the ARA General Belgrano, taking with it 323 Argentine sailors—more than half the eventual Argentine casualty count. Argentina fought on gamely, launching aerial attacks against British ships and sinking several, but the Argentines lost land battles at Goose Green and the capital, Port Stanley. The little war ended with Argentina's surrender of the Falklands on June 14, 1982.

Below: Attorney General Robert Kennedy issued a press statement on neutrality and Cuba after the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion.





# WAR ON DRUGS

For decades, Colombia has struggled with poverty, competing political ideologies, and organized violence, driven in large part by the production of coca, the main ingredient in cocaine. Colombian violence has a tangled history, rooted in a mid-century civil war called *La Violencia* and, looking back even further, the strained relations between wealthy (European-descended) landowners and poor (indigenous and African) workers.

The government has never succeeded in gaining full control, contending first with left-wing guerrilla groups like the National Liberation Army (EPL) or the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), then with right-wing paramilitaries—the most important, until its demobilization in 2006, being the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC)—and finally, with powerful drug cartels such as the Medellín cartel run by Pablo Escobar or, more recently, by the *bacrim*s, or “criminal bands.”



*Raised in poverty, Pablo Escobar ran the Medellín cartel; at its peak it controlled 80 percent of the world's cocaine.*

Below: Deemed a “terrorist act” by Colombian president Santos, a car bomb exploded in Bogotá's financial center on August 12, 2010, injuring thirteen.

Bottom: Protesters in Calgary, Canada, rally against FARC in one of many marches held worldwide on February 4, 2008.

## A NATION RENT ASUNDER

At first, leftist parties, formed in the 1960s during the Cold War, fought for socialist policies, including redistribution of wealth, drawing support largely from the rural populations, crippled by poverty, who were attracted to Marxism. Though they made no common cause with each other, no fewer than five such groups, including FARC, emerged between 1965 and 1971. Against these guerrilla fighters a number of right-wing paramilitary groups formed, drawing support largely from the wealthier segments of society. These eventually coalesced, in 1997, into AUC. Both sides have taken part in drug trafficking, which accounts for 90 percent of the cocaine sold on the illegal drug market in the United States. Colombia has one of the world's highest homicide rates; bombings, kidnappings, extortion, and other crimes are common. Weak and corrupt government bodies have had little success in reining in the violence, although some progress has been made.

Since 1985, when one guerrilla group—M-19—killed 101 people, including eleven judges in the Palace of Justice, Colombia has increasingly made a concerted effort to combat the drug trade; high-level assassinations continue nevertheless. Pablo Escobar, drug lord extraordinaire, escaped from jail after barely thirteen months, only to die in a recapture effort in 1993. In 1998, the government demilitarized a 16,000-square-mile area in the southeast, effectively turning the region over to FARC, by then the largest and most powerful guerrilla group. Tense peace talks



*Above: Colombian police stand guard over one and a half tons of cocaine, seized in Santa Marta, Colombia.*

broke down in 2002, but since then, several high-ranking FARC officers have been captured or killed, the Colombian army has rescued several high-profile hostages, and, in April 2012, FARC freed its last military and police hostages. In 2003 the right-wing AUC demobilized; more than 31,000 members of paramilitary groups have since turned in their weapons.

Despite these promising developments, the new drug traffickers (*bacrim*s) showed no sign of curbing their activity, and the government, despite the billions of dollars in aid from a U.S. government desperate to halt the flow of cocaine, cannot maintain control over a country whose divisions run so deeply. In 2010, tension over FARC rebels nearly brought Colombia to war with its left-wing neighbor Venezuela, and FARC has teamed up with one of its former left-wing rivals, the National Liberation Army, together controlling the fields of coca, which they sell to the *bacrim*s. In short, the situation remains volatile, and lasting peace will arrive only slowly.

Below: Grown and processed in Colombia, cocaine is trafficked through Central America and Mexico into the United States.







*The death of bin Laden weakened al-Qaeda. Atiyah Abd al-Rahman, the organization's number two, was also assassinated in 2011.*

# WAR ON TERROR

On the morning of September 11, 2001, a militant Islamic group called al-Qaeda (“The Base”) conducted the deadliest attack on America’s home ground in U.S. history. Four planes took off that morning from American cities; hijacked by al-Qaeda operatives, two of them crashed into the World Trade Center buildings in New York City; one struck the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.; and one, taken back from the terrorists by the passengers, crashed in a Pennsylvania field. By far the most successful operation of any terrorist group, the September 11 attacks—also known simply as 9/11—were an undeniable victory for al-Qaeda, but they also united the rest of the world against them, placing the organization squarely in the crosshairs of the United States.

## A DEADLY MORNING

The head of al-Qaeda, Osama Bin Laden, had issued a *fatwa*, or religious edict, against Western “invaders” as early as 1992, while based in Sudan. Several years later, the target of international outrage, he fled to Afghanistan, whose fundamentalist Islamic leaders—the Taliban, former American allies against the Soviets—gave him refuge. Bin Laden saw the United States as the head of a Western snake; with the Taliban’s support, he was able to build a force of up to 20,000 around the world to carry out terrorist activities against the West.

The incalculable emotional, moral, and economic havoc generated by the attacks proved bin Laden’s reach far longer than anyone had ever imagined. By morning’s end, 2,750 people were dead in New York City, 184 at the Pentagon, and forty in Pennsylvania, the handiwork of only nineteen al-Qaeda terrorists armed with box cutters, for just some \$500,000.

The Boston flights (American Airlines flight 11 and United Airlines flight 175), one for each of the Twin Towers, struck their targets first, at 8:46 a.m. and 9:03 a.m. The Washington flight—American Airlines flight 77—was forced back toward the city and hit the Pentagon at 9:37 a.m. Only the fourth flight, United Airlines flight 93 from Newark, New Jersey, did not reach its target (either the White House or the Capitol Building), thanks to the remarkable heroism of its passengers, who had been alerted to the earlier attacks, by means of a late departure and cell phones.



*Above: Shortly after the second (south) tower was hit, lower Manhattan was engulfed in clouds of smoke and debris.*

## CAPTURE OR KILL

The 9/11 attacks were not America’s first experience with terrorism nor, sadly, the world’s last, but they brought home to the United States as nothing else could have the brutal reality of a tactic designed to engender a climate of fear for coercive political ends. Backed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the United States declared war, marching into Afghanistan with the intention of uprooting and dismantling al-Qaeda and its Taliban protectors (see page 203). Ten years lapsed, however, before a U.S. Navy SEAL team killed bin Laden in a capture-or-kill mission at his hiding place, a compound in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the mostly successful operation against al-Qaeda has not removed terrorism from the world, nor militant, fundamentalist Islam, and the aftershocks of 9/11 continue to reverberate in the United States and around the world.

Left: *This photo provides a bird’s-eye view of Kandahar City, which lies at the heart of the war in Afghanistan, begun October 7, 2001. Some of the fiercest fighting has taken place in the city, which is today patrolled by U.S. and Afghan forces. International troops are stationed at the nearby NATO-run Kandahar Air Base.*



## Fields of Poppies

Afghanistan is one of the world’s primary producers of opium, a drug made from poppies. The central Asian country borders Iran and Pakistan, and shares with them a strongly Islamic culture. Afghanistan is riven by warlords, poverty, and terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, although the decade-long war with the United States has drastically reduced al-Qaeda’s power there. The cultivation of opium, one of the few crops impoverished Afghan farmers can dependably earn money from, is a particularly intractable problem; the illegal-drug trade funds both organized crime and the warlords, rendering unsuccessful all efforts to halt the drug supply at its origin. Recently, however, a fungal disease spread throughout the poppy fields of Afghanistan, greatly reducing the drug’s viability and offering some hope that, in the future, farmers may turn to less lucrative (but legal) crop production.

Below: *After passengers and crew on flight 93 learned of the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks, they attempted to regain control of the aircraft. The plane crashed in a Pennsylvania field, but recovered flight recorders show that their actions prevented the terrorists from hitting their target. The map shows the paths of the four planes.*





# FUTURE CONFLICTS

“They are talking about peace as a distant goal, as an end we seek, but one day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distant goal we seek, but that it is a means by which we arrive at that goal.” So said civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., by way of criticizing the American President, Lyndon B. Johnson, who was promoting peace in his speeches even as he prosecuted the Vietnam War.

King’s hopeful words, spoken in 1967, seem, sadly, to have been forgotten. Since the Vietnam era, the United States has waged no fewer than three wars, with involvements in several more. Around the world, people continue to fight for the reasons they always have: for territory, limited resources, power, revenge, or to preserve sacred cultural values and institutions. Thanks to the Internet, we can speak of a world grown smaller and a global human community; equally, however, we see that as the world grows smaller, the human population expands. Localized conflicts over such crucial resources as water and arable land threaten to spark war in many parts of the world. Old ethnic conflicts, in places like central Africa and southeastern Europe, simmer today, forever threatening to erupt into full-scale war.

Where will future wars occur? Perhaps on the Korean peninsula, divided for more than fifty years into two inimical countries. Perhaps in Kashmir, the contested province between India and Pakistan. Perhaps in Israel, or Iran, or Syria. Since 1945, the world has lived in fear of a nuclear war—and undeniably, modern nuclear weapons would rain down death and untold suffering on millions, with potentially devastating consequences for the environment. But any future war must be feared for its destructive potential. Five thousand years ago, armies mustered a few thousand warriors, or perhaps only a few hundred. Armies’ fighting forces today number in the millions. Even a “conventional” war fought with such massive armies and wielding modern weapons would prove devastating.

Perhaps such considerations will deter future conflicts. Human history being what it is, however, the prospect of world peace, if it is not actively receding, seems at least as distant a goal today as it did in 1967. As an end in itself, peace seems nearly impossible for individual human beings, let alone nations, to achieve. Still, we can hope. More than any human activity, war has shaped the history of the world as we know it. But perhaps we can use the lessons of the past to leave war behind, where it can gather dust on the bookshelves of future historians.







APPENDIX: CHRONOLOGY

c. 3100–2686 BC	Unification of Egypt	c. 420–532	Raids and invasions of the Ephthalites
c. 2660 BC	Gilgamesh of Uruk defeats Agga of Kish (historicity debated)	441–453	Attila the Hun raids Europe
Mid-twenty-fifth century BC	Lagash conquers surrounding territories in Mesopotamia	455	Vandals sack Rome
c. 2334–2279 BC	Sargon of Akkad conquers new empire	598–613	Koguryo-Sui wars
c. 1764–56 BC	Campaigns of Hammurabi forge Babylonian Empire	626 or 627	Battle of Nineveh
1595 BC	Mursilis I of the Old Kingdom of the Hittites conquers Babylon	632–633	Ridda Wars
1479–1425 BC	Thutmose III of Egypt expands borders to largest extent	632–661	Rashidun Caliphate (first Islamic empire) expands
c. 1400 BC	Mitanni Empire expands to widest extent	635	Tibetan invasion of China
Mid- to late-fourteenth century BC	Suppiluliumas of the Hittite Empire expands borders to widest extent	668	Sui China conquers Koguryo
c. 1274 BC	Battle of Kadesh	676	Silla conquers Korean peninsula
c. 1150 BC	Increasing militarism of Olmecs (debated)	711	Umayyad army conquers Visigothic Spain
Ninth–seventh centuries BC	Neo-Assyrian Empire flourishes	732	Battle of Poitiers (also known as Tours)
Eight century BC	Lelantine War	763	Tibet conquers Chang'an, the capital of China
720 BC	Assyria destroys Samaria (capital of Israel)	769–805	Campaigns of Charlemagne
c. 700 BC	Kush flourishes	793	Viking raid on Lindisfarne (first recorded Viking attack)
c. 700 BC – c. 670 BC	Scythian-Cimmerian war	c. 900–1524	Mayan Postclassic period: large wars destabilize civilization, precipitating collapse
632 BC	Battle of Chengpu	979–1004	Liao-Song wars
598–38 or 586–539 BC	The Jewish Babylonian Exile	1039–1119	Xia-Song wars
550–c. 529 BC	Campaigns of Cyrus the Great	1050–1203	Khmer-Cham wars
522–486 BC	Reign of Darius the Great; height of Achaemenid Empire	1066	Battle of Hastings
490 BC	First Greco-Persian War (Battle of Marathon)	1095–1272	The Crusades
480–479 BC	Second Greco-Persian War	1099	Crusaders seize Jerusalem
431–404 BC	Peloponnesian War (also called the Second Peloponnesian War)	1127	Battle of Dongjing (Song emperor captured by Jin)
336–323 BC	Campaigns of Alexander the Great	1129–1208	Jin-Southern Song wars
323–c. 297 BC	Campaigns of Chandragupta	1180–85	Gempei War
264–241 BC	First Punic War	1187	Battle of Hattin
221 BC	Qin conquers China; first Chinese empire formed	1187	Saladin seizes Jerusalem
218–201 BC	Second Punic War	1209–27	Campaigns of Genghis Khan
200–196 BC	Second Macedonian War	1258	Kublai Khan (Yuan dynasty) conquers Korea
192–188 BC	Seleucid War	1258	Siege of Baghdad
151–146 BC	Third Punic War	1276–83	Edward I's wars in Wales
133–119 BC	Xiongnu-Han wars	1279	Yuan (Mongol) dynasty conquers China
59–52 BC	Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul	1293	Raden Wijaya defeats Mongols, establishes Majapahit
55–36 BC	Roman-Parthian War	1296–1314	English-Scottish wars
49–47 BC	Roman Civil War	1324–60	Campaigns of Orhan I (first wave of Ottoman expansion)
AD 66–70	First Jewish Revolt	1337–1453	Hundred Years' War
101–102	First Dacian War	1346	Battle of Crécy
105–106	Second Dacian War	1356	Battle of Poitiers
115–117	Kitos War	1389	Battle of Kosovo
132–136	Second Jewish Revolt (also known as the Third Revolt and the Bar Kokhba Revolt)	1396	Battle of Nicopolis
220–280	War of Three Kingdoms	1415	Battle of Agincourt
226	Ardashir I founds Sassanid Empire (Battle of Hormizdagan)	1428–1519	Expansion of Aztec Empire
320–415	Conquests of the Gupta dynasty	1429–30	Campaigns of Joan of Arc
410	Visigoths sack Rome	1438–1525	Expansion of Incan Empire
		1453	Ottomans seize Constantinople
		1453–85	Wars of the Roses
		1467–77	Onin War
		1468	Sunni Ali of Songhai captures Timbuktu
		1492	Ferdinand II and Isabella I of Spain complete the Reconquista
		1519–2	Spanish-Aztec war



1526	Battle of Mohács	1900	Fifth Anglo-Ashanti War ("War of the Golden Stool")
1526–30	Zahir-ud-din-Muhammad Babur conquers northern India, establishes Mughal Empire	1904–05	Russo-Japanese War
1527–81	Expansion of Burma (Toungoo Dynasty)	1914–18	World War I
1536	Battle of Cuzco	1914	Battle of Tannenberg
1556–95	Campaigns of Akbar the Great	1916	Battle of Verdun
1560–82	Campaigns of Oda Nobunaga	1916	Battle of the Somme
1573–98	Campaigns of Toyotomi Hideyoshi	1917	February Revolution (Nicholas II of Russia overthrown)
1575	Battle of Nagashino	1917	Third Battle of Ypres (also known as Battle of Passchendaele)
1588	Destruction of the Spanish Armada	1917	October Revolution (Bolsheviks overthrow Russian government)
1600	Battle of Sekigahara	1917–20	Russian Civil War
1676–81	First Russo-Turkish War	1919–21	Irish War of Independence
1687	Second Russo-Turkish War	1925–33	Nicaraguan Civil War
1689	Third Russo-Turkish War	1927–49	Chinese Civil War
1695–96	Fourth Russo-Turkish War	1931	Japanese invasion of Manchuria
1700–18	Great Northern War	1935–36	Second Italo-Ethiopian War
1701–14	War of Spanish Succession	1936–39	Spanish Civil War
1710–12	Fifth Russo-Turkish War (part of Great Northern War)	1937	Japanese invasion of China
1735–39	Sixth Russo-Turkish War	1939–45	World War II
1747–93	Ten Campaigns of Qianlong	1940–41	The Blitz
1756–63	French and Indian War	1941	Pearl Harbor
1768–74	Seventh Russo-Turkish War	1942–43	Battle of Stalingrad
1775–83	American Revolutionary War	1944	D-Day
1782–95	Campaigns of Kamehameha I	1944–45	Battle of the Bulge
1787–91	Eighth Russo-Turkish War	1945	Battle of Iwo Jima
1791–1804	Haitian Revolution	1945	Hiroshima/Nagasaki
1796–1815	Napoleonic Wars	1947–48	Indian-Pakistani War of 1947
1805	Battle of Austerlitz	1948	First Arab-Israeli War
1806–12	Ninth Russo-Turkish War	1950–53	Korean War
1810–24	Wars of Mexican Independence	1953–58	Cuban Revolution
1812–14	War of 1812	1954–62	Algerian War
1814–24	Wars of independence in South America	1956	Suez War (second Arab-Israeli war)
1815	Battle of Waterloo	1953–75	Vietnam War
1818–46	Musket Wars	1965–66	Indian-Pakistani War of 1965
1824–31	First Anglo-Ashanti War	1967	The Six-Day War (third Arab-Israeli war)
1824–35	Black War	1971	Indian-Pakistani War of 1971
1828–29	Tenth Russo-Turkish War	1973–74	The Yom Kippur War (fourth Arab-Israeli war)
1839–42	First Opium War	1980–88	Iran-Iraq War
1843–72	New Zealand Wars	1982	Fifth Arab-Israeli war
1853–56	Crimean War (Eleventh Russo-Turkish War)	1983–2009	Sri Lankan Civil War
1856–60	Second Opium War	1987–93	Intifada (first)
1857–58	Indian Mutiny/ Indian War of Independence	1990	Iraq-Kuwait War
1861–65	American Civil War	1990–93	Rwandan Civil War
1866	Battle of Königgrätz	1996–99	Kosovo Conflict
1870–71	Franco-Prussian War	1999	Kargil Conflict (fourth Indian-Pakistani war [contested])
1863–64	Second Anglo-Ashanti War	2000	Intifada (second)
1877–78	Twelfth Russo-Turkish War	2001	Terrorist attacks on United States (9/11)
1879	Anglo-Zulu War	2001–	Afghanistan War
1880–81	First Boer War	2003–11	Iraq War
1873–74	Third Anglo-Ashanti War	2010–	Arab Spring
1895–96	First Italo-Ethiopian War	2011	Egyptian Revolution
1895–96	Fourth Anglo-Ashanti War	2011	Libyan Revolution
1898	Spanish-American War	2012	Syrian Revolution
1899–1902	Philippine-American War		
1899–1901	Boxer Uprising		
1899–1902	Second Boer War		



INDEX

A

Abbas I 168  
Abbasid Caliphate 24, 151, 154, 156, 206, 207  
Abbas Mirza 167, 169  
Aborigines 256  
Achaemenid Empire 20, 134, 135  
Adowa, Battle of 36, 38  
Aethelred 70, 71  
Afghan Empire, the last 169  
Afghanistan  
    Afghanistan War 107, 243, 309  
    Anglo-Afghan wars 194  
    civil wars 242  
    The Great Game 194, 242, 275  
    Khwarazemia 187  
    and the Maratha Empire 190, 191  
    modern nation, formation 169, 191  
    opium production in 309  
    Pala Empire 183  
    Third Battle of Panipat 191  
Afghanistan War 107, 243, 309  
Africa 12–45. *See also* Egypt, Ancient  
    blood diamonds 41  
    conflicts for control of 34–39  
    Matapa Empire 32  
    North. *See* North Africa  
    postcolonial, wars of 40–43  
    protests of 2011 44–45  
    Sahara Desert 20–25, 26  
    Shaka and the Zulu Empire 33–34  
    trading points 30–31  
    Western, Empires of 26–27, 51  
    World War I 39, 103  
    World War II 38–39  
Africa’s World War 43  
Agung, Sultan 248  
Ain Jalat, Battle of 157  
aircraft 102, 106–107  
Akbar the Great 168, 188  
Akkad, Enheduanna of 125  
Akkad, Sargon of 125  
Aksum 30  
Alamo, Battle of the 301  
Alaric 66  
Albania 62, 120  
Alexander the Great 138–141, 179, 181  
Alfred the Great 70  
Algerian War 40  
Algiers, Battle of 40  
Almohads 25  
Almoravids 25, 26, 79  
al-Qaeda 175, 243, 309  
Amarna 16  
America, Colonial 287–289, 294  
American Civil War 303–305  
American Revolution 289, 292, 294  
The Americas 280–309  
    battle for N. Amer. 286–291  
    distant islands 306–307  
    independence 294–305  
    pre-Columbian 136, 282–285, 286  
    War on Drugs 308  
    War on Terror 309  
Anatolia, Ancient 49, 146–148, 151, 152, 159, 162, 164  
Anawrahta 269  
Angkor 268, 270, 273

Anglo-Afghan wars 194  
Anglo-Mysore Wars 192, 275  
Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms 53, 67  
Angola 31, 41  
An-Shi Rebellion 205, 206, 208  
Antietam, Battle of 303  
Antioch, Battle of 153  
Antony, Mark 145  
Arabia, Ancient 24, 30, 148, 149, 160, 164  
Arab-Israeli Wars 172–173  
Arab nations 170, 172–173, 175  
Arab Spring 44–45  
Archidamian War 51  
Argentina 299, 300, 307  
Armenia 111, 145–147, 158, 168, 169  
Aryans (Indo-Iranians) 178, 180  
Ashanti 29  
Ashurbanipal 124, 127  
Asia. *See* Central and Southern Asia; Northern and Eastern Asia; Southeast Asia and the Pacific  
Assyria 17, 126, 127, 131  
astronomy, Mayan 283  
Atlanta, Battle of 305  
Attila the Hun 65, 66  
Aurangzeb 188, 189, 190  
Australia 103, 250, 251, 256, 259  
Austria 90, 99–103, 105, 164–165, 186, 231  
Ayutthaya, Kingdom of 266, 272, 273, 275  
Aztecs 136, 281, 285

B

Babur 188  
Babylon 126–129, 131, 134, 144  
Bach Dang, Battle of 247  
Bach Dang River, Battle of 263  
Bactria 140, 142, 184, 185  
Baekje 216, 218  
Baghdad 151, 156, 166, 170, 171, 207  
Bali 247, 250, 251  
Barbarian frontier 60–67  
Barbarossa 165  
Bar Kokhba Revolt 133  
Battle of the Bulge 116  
Bay of Pigs 307  
Belgium 42, 115  
Berbers (Imazighen) 24, 26, 78, 150  
Bering Land Bridge 281  
Beyezid I 80  
birds, extinctions 255  
Bismarck, Otto von 100  
Black Prince 85  
Black War 256  
blood diamonds 41  
Boer Wars 35  
Bohemia 91  
Bolivia 300, 307  
Bolshevik Revolution 104, 108  
Bonnie Prince Charlie 96  
Borneo 250, 251  
Bosnia 120  
Boxer Rebellion 231  
Boyacá, Battle of 299, 300  
Brazil 298  
Brian 73  
Britain. *See also* England; Ireland; Scotland; Wales  
    Afghanistan War 243

    in Africa 29, 34, 35, 38–39, 41  
    American Revolution 289, 294  
    Anglo-Burmese Wars 275, 278  
    Anglo-Mysore Wars 192, 275  
    Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms 53, 67  
    Boxer Uprising in China 231  
    British East India Company 189, 190, 192, 193  
    in Burma 275, 278  
    Chickamauga War 289  
    Crimean War 93  
    and the Dutch East Indies 250  
    Falklands War 307  
    French-Indian War 288  
    The Great Game 194, 242, 275  
    Hadrian’s Wall 57  
    Hong Kong 230, 257, 258  
    in India 170, 192, 193, 275  
    and Indochina 251, 276  
    Iraq War 175  
    and Irish War of Independence 109  
    Jacobite risings 96  
    in the Middle East 170, 171  
    Napoleonic Wars 98, 295  
    Opium Wars 230  
    Siege of Seringapatam 192  
    in Sri Lanka 197  
    Suez War 172  
    in Tasmania, Black War 256  
    War of 1812 292, 295  
    withdrawal from Israel 172  
    World War I 103–104, 109, 170, 171  
    World War II 38–39, 113, 115, 258  
British East India Company 189, 190, 192, 193  
Bronze Age 15, 52, 62, 260, 261  
Buddhism 183, 185, 197, 205, 246, 266, 269, 272  
Bull Run, Second Battle of 303  
Burma 228, 258, 269, 271, 273, 274, 275, 278. *See also* Myanmar  
Byzantine Empire 80, 149, 152, 153, 163, 212

C

Caesar 55–56  
Cambodia 267, 268, 276  
camels 134  
Canaan 14, 16, 130  
Canada 104, 288, 295, 308  
Cannae, Battle of 20, 21  
Canton Bay, Battle of 209  
Cao Cao 204  
Carrhae, Battle of 145  
Carthage 20–21, 23, 142  
castles 86–87  
cataphracts 152  
Celts 55, 60–61, 67, 142  
Central America 19, 281, 308  
Central and Southern Asia 176–197  
    Ancient India, Empires of 178–183  
    Central Asia, Empires of 184–185  
    conflicts for control of 148, 158–159, 194–197, 242, 275. *See also* India; Pakistan  
    land of sacred rivers 190–193  
    Mongols and Turks 186–189. *See also*  
    Mongol Empire  
    Scythians 63  
Centrifugal Offensive 258



Cerro Gordo, Battle of 302  
Chaldiran, Battle of 168  
Champa 247, 265, 267, 270  
Chancellorsville, Battle of 304  
Chandragupta 179  
Charge of the Light Brigade 93  
chariots 18–19  
Charlemagne 82  
Chechnya 121  
Chengpu, Battle of 200  
Chickamauga War 289, 304  
Chile 282, 284, 299  
China. *See also* People's Republic of China  
    An-Shi Rebellion 205, 206, 208  
    Battle of Talas 206, 207  
    Boxer Rebellion 231  
    Civil War 240  
    control of Vietnam 262–263, 265  
    culture 201, 206, 208  
    Five Dynasties 209  
    Han Dynasty 203, 204, 216, 262  
    invasions by Japan 234, 240, 250, 258  
    Jin Dynasty 204, 209, 224  
    Kingdom of Funan 268  
    Koguryo-China Wars 217  
    Korean War 241  
    Manchu Dynasty 219  
    Middle Kingdom 200–209  
    Ming Dynasty 265, 266, 267, 273  
    and the Mongol Empire 156, 224, 228  
    Opium Wars 230  
    Qin Dynasty 202, 262  
    Qing Dynasty 228–229, 230, 231, 232  
    Sino-Japanese Wars 234  
    Six Dynasties Period 204  
    Song Dynasty 209–210  
    Spring and Autumn Period 200, 203  
    Sui Dynasty 217  
    Taiping Rebellion 230, 232  
    Tang Dynasty 205–208, 217, 218  
    Tibet, war with 205  
    united in 221 bc 262  
    use of gunpowder 265  
    and the Vietnam-Champa Wars 267  
    Warlord Period 240  
    War of the Three Kingdoms 204  
    Warring States Period 201, 202, 203  
    Xia Dynasty 209, 224  
    Yuan Dynasty 272  
    Zhou Dynasty 200, 201, 217  
Christianity  
    advent of 23  
    Akrum 30  
    in Europe 25, 68, 70, 74, 266  
    missionaries in India 193  
    Orthodox 169, 213  
    Protestantism 81, 89, 91  
    reformations 81, 91  
    spread to China 231  
    Templars 155  
    Vandals 23  
    wars of religion 78–81, 111. *See also*  
        Crusades  
chronology 312–313  
Cimbrian War 64  
Clontarf, Battle of 73  
codes and code talkers 259  
Cold War 107, 118–119, 239, 277, 307, 308

Colombia 284, 299, 300, 308  
Constantinople 65, 68, 150, 160, 161, 163, 212  
Cossacks 108, 214, 215  
Crassus 55  
Crecy, Battles of 85  
Crimean War 93  
Crusades 79–81, 152–155, 163, 213  
Cuba 41, 306, 307  
Cuban Missile Crisis 307  
Cuban Revolution 306, 307  
Custer's Last Stand 290  
Cyrus the Great 131, 134, 139, 146

D

Dacian Wars 57  
Dai Viet 264, 265, 270. *See also* Vietnam  
Danelaw 69  
Dan no Ura, Battle of 222  
Darius the Great 49, 135, 136  
David, King of Israel 130, 173  
D-day 115  
Decebalus 57  
Diadochi, wars of the 140–141, 142  
diamonds, blood 41  
Dolores, the Cry of 297  
Dravidians 178  
drugs 230, 308, 309  
Durrani Dynasty 169, 191  
Dutch East Indies 248, 249, 250, 258

E

Eastern Asia. *See* Northern and Eastern Asia  
Ecuador 285, 300  
Edward I 83  
Egypt 44, 98, 170, 171, 172, 173  
Egypt, Ancient  
    and Alexander the Great 138, 140  
    Arab Muslim control of 148, 157  
    Battle of Kadesh 16, 129  
    and control of Judah 131  
    and control of Levant 132  
    Crusades 155, 163  
    Hellenic culture 132  
    Kingdoms 14–16  
    and Kush 15, 16, 17  
    Muslim dynasties of 157  
    under Ptolemaic rule 140, 142, 143

8888 Uprising 278  
El Cid 79  
elephants 180–181, 269  
England. *See also* Britain  
    Alfred the Great 70  
    Battle of Gravelines 89  
    Battle of Hastings 75, 183  
    invasions by Vikings 67, 68, 69–71  
    Medieval warfare 82–85, 160  
    Napoleonic wars 98, 99  
    Wars of the Roses 88  
Ethiopia 13, 36–37, 38, 39  
ethnic cleansing 43, 111, 112  
Etruria 54  
Europe 46–121  
    Barbarian frontier 60–67  
    birth of 88–91  
    freedom and fascism 108–111

Imperial 92–99  
Medieval warfare 82–87  
Olympian Empires 48–57  
Viking Age 52, 68–75  
wars of religion 78–81, 111, 120. *See also*  
    Crusades  
    World War I 102–105  
    World War II 112–117  
Every, Henry 189

F

Falklands War 307  
Fallen Timbers, Battle of 289  
Field of Blackbirds 80  
France  
    Algerian War 40  
    American Revolution 294  
    Boxer Uprising in China 231  
    control of Vietnam 276, 277  
    Crimean War 93  
    Franco-Prussian War 101  
    French-Indian War 281, 288  
    French Revolution 97, 296  
    French-Thai War 276  
    Haitian Revolution 296  
    Indochina independence from 276  
    Indochina War of 1946, First 276  
    Medieval warfare 84–85, 160  
    Napoleonic Wars 98–99, 295  
    and Rwanda 42  
    Second Opium War 230  
    Suez War 172  
    Surrender at Bailén 298  
    War of Spanish Succession 95  
    World War I 102, 104–105  
    World War II 39, 40, 115–116, 258, 276, 279  
Franco, Gen. Francisco 110  
Franco-Prussian War 101  
French-Indian War 281, 288  
French Revolution 296  
French-Thai War 276  
Funan, Kingdom of 268  
fur trade 213  
future conflicts 310–311

G

Galatia 61  
Gallic Wars 55, 56  
Gallipoli campaign 103  
Gandhi 193, 278  
Gaugamela, Battle of 138, 139, 180, 181  
Gaya 216, 218  
Genghis Khan 156, 158, 186, 187, 224  
genocide 43, 111, 112  
Genpei War 222–223  
Germanic peoples 55, 57, 59, 60, 64, 66–67, 82  
Germany  
    Boxer Uprising in China 231  
    First Reich 101  
    and the Spanish Civil War 110  
    Third Reich 116  
    Thirty Years' War 91  
    World War I 39, 102–105, 106, 171  
    World War II 37, 38–39, 112–117,



118–119, 258, 276, 279  
Ghana Empire 25, 26, 41  
Goguryeo 216, 218  
Gojoseon 216  
The Golden Horde 158, 186, 224  
Gravelines, Battle of 89  
Great Britain. *See* Britain  
The Great Game 194, 242, 275  
Great Heathen Army 69  
Great Northern War 94  
Great Sioux Nation 290  
Great Wall of China 201, 202, 203  
Great Zimbabwe 32  
Greco-Bactrian Kingdom 184  
Greece  
    Ancient 20, 48–53, 61, 62, 138–142, 144  
    World War II 38, 113  
Greek-Persian Wars 49–51  
Guadalcanal, Battle of 258, 259  
Guam 258, 306  
Guatemala 282, 283  
Gu’edena 124  
Gulf War 175, 242  
Gupta Dynasty 182  
Gurkhas 228, 229

H

Habsburg Dynasty 90  
Hadrian’s Wall 57  
Haengju, Battle of 219  
Haitian Revolution 296  
Hammurabi, campaigns of 126  
Han Dynasty 203, 204, 216, 262  
Hannibal 20, 21, 180, 269  
Harold Godwinson of Wessex 75  
Hasmoneans 132  
Hastings, Battle of 75, 183  
Hawaii 254, 258  
Hellenic culture 132, 140, 142, 184, 185, 211  
Hephthalites 65  
Hinduism 182, 188, 190, 195, 246, 247  
Hitler, Adolf 112, 116. *See also* Germany, World War II  
Hittites 16, 128, 129  
Ho Chi Minh 276, 277  
Honduras 282, 283  
Hong, Xiuquan 230, 232  
Hong Kong 230, 257, 258  
Hoplites 48, 49  
Huang di (Yellow Emperor) 211  
Hülegü 156–157  
Hundred Years’ War 84, 160  
Hungary 90, 102–103, 105, 162, 164, 165, 186, 231  
Huns 65  
Hurrians 128  
Hussite Wars 81  
Hyphasis, march to the 139

I

Illyria 62  
Inca 284  
India  
    Afghanistan as base of attack on 242  
    Ancient 178–183, 184, 185, 211

British control of 170, 192, 193, 275  
Chola Dynasty 270  
First Indian Empire 179  
Gupta Dynasty 182  
Hephthalites 65  
independence from Britain 193  
India-Pakistan Wars 195–196  
Maratha Empire 190–191  
Mogul Empire 188–189  
Pala Empire 183  
Siege of Seringapatam 192  
    and Sri Lankan civil war 197  
    Timur control of 158–159  
India-Pakistan Wars 195–196  
Indochina 40, 258, 272, 276, 277, 279  
Indochina War of 1946, First 276  
Indo-Iranians (Aryans) 178, 180  
Indonesia 247, 251, 258  
Iran 144–145, 174, 187, 242  
Iran-Iraq War 174  
Iraq 126, 148, 174–175, 206, 207, 243. *See also* Baghdad  
Iraq War 175  
Ireland 72, 73, 109  
Iron Age 260, 261  
Islam  
    Afghanistan, Islamic State of 242  
    expansion 24, 30, 78, 148, 207  
    and the Mali Empire 27  
    Mogul Empire 188, 189  
    Muslims and the India-Pakistan border 195  
    Muslim sects 150, 154  
    Muslim world, 11th-13th century 154–155  
    Shia Iran, Islamic Revolution in 174  
    Shia Muslims 150, 164, 168, 174, 175  
    and the Songhai Empire 28  
    Sunni Muslims 44, 150, 165, 174  
    Thailand 279  
    wars of religion 78–80, 111. *See also* Crusades  
Islandlwana, Battle of 34  
Ismail I 166, 168  
Israel 130, 131, 172–173  
Italo-Ethiopian Wars 36–37  
Italy. *See also* Roman Empire  
    Boxer Uprising in China 231  
    fascist, genocide during 111  
    invasion by Huns 65  
    Italo-Ethiopian Wars 36–37  
    Medieval warfare 82  
    World War I 38, 105  
    World War II 38, 112, 113, 115, 258  
Ivan the Terrible 214, 215  
Iwo Jima, Battle of 236

J

Jacobite Risings 96  
Jammu 195  
Japan  
    Battle of Nagashino 227  
    Boxer Uprising in China 231  
    invasion of Manchuria 258  
    invasions of China 234, 240, 250, 258  
    and Korea 219, 234, 235  
    Mongol invasion of 224  
    Onin War 225, 227  
    Russo-Japanese War 233

samurai 222  
Sengoku Period 225–226  
Siberian intervention by 235  
Sino-Japanese Wars 234  
    use of gunpowder 161  
    World War II 112, 234, 236–239, 250–251, 258, 276–277  
Java 246, 247–249, 250, 251  
Java Sea, Battle of the 251  
Java War (1740) 249  
Java Wars (1200s) 247  
Jayavarman II 270  
Jerusalem 130–133, 143, 153–155, 171–173  
Jewish revolts 133  
Jin Dynasty 204, 209, 224  
Jordan 172  
Judah (Judea) 131, 132, 144  
Jugurthine War 22

K

Kadesh, Battle of 16, 129  
Kamehameha I 254  
Karluks 207  
Kashmir 195  
Khmer, the Kingdom of 267, 270, 272  
Khwarazemia 187  
Kievan Rus, 9th to 13th centuries 212  
King Philip’s War 287  
King’s Mountain, Battle of 289  
knights 152, 155  
Knut the Great 71, 74  
Koguryo-China Wars 217  
Kongo, Kingdom of the 31  
Kongo-Angola war 31  
Königgrätz, Battle of 100  
Korea and the Korean Peninsula 216–221, 234, 235, 241  
Korean War 241  
Kosovo conflicts 80, 111, 120  
Kublai Khan 224, 247, 264, 271  
Kush, Nubian Kingdom of 15, 16, 17  
Kushan Empire 185  
Kuwait 44, 175

L

land bridge 281, 286  
Land of a Thousand Cities. *See* Bactria  
Laos 204, 267, 276  
Lawrence of Arabia 170  
League of Nations 37  
Lebanon 164, 172, 173  
legions, Roman 59  
Lelantine War 48  
Lenin 108  
Levant  
    and Alexander the Great 132, 138  
    and Ancient Egypt 15, 16, 129, 132  
    Ayyubid control of 157  
    and the Battle of Kadesh 129  
    conflict with Ptolemy and Seleucus 142, 143  
    Crusades 153, 157  
    invasion by Parthian 144  
    Ottoman control of 164  
    transition from Hellenic to Arabic 149



Libya 14, 15, 16, 20, 38, 44  
 Little Bighorn, Battle of 290  
 Livonian War 214  
 The Lost City 282  
 Lydia 134

## M

Maccabees 132  
 Macedonia (Macedon) 120, 138–143, 179  
 Macedonian War, Second 62, 142  
 Madagascar 246  
 Maipú, Battle of 299, 300  
 Malacca, Sultanate of 266, 267, 273  
 Malaysian Peninsula 245, 268, 276  
 Maldon, Battle of 71  
 Mali Empire 27, 41  
 Malta, Siege of 164  
 Mamluks 155, 157, 162  
 Manchu Dynasty 219  
 Manchuria 219, 240, 258  
 Manifest Destiny 302  
 Manzikert, Battle of 152  
 Maori 255  
 Maratha Empire 190–191  
 marathon (track event) 49  
 Marathon, Battle of 49  
 Marius, Gaius 59  
 Marlborough, Duke of 95  
 Matapa Empire 32  
 Mataram Sultanate 248, 249  
 Mauretania 23  
 Mauryan Empire 142, 179, 182  
 Maya 136, 281, 283  
 Medang Kingdom 246  
 Median Empire 134  
 Medieval Age 82–87  
 Mesoamerica 282–285  
 Mesopotamia 124–126, 139, 147, 166, 170–171, 178, 180  
 Mexican-American War 297, 302  
 Mexico 281, 282, 283, 285, 297, 301, 302, 308  
 Mi, Battle of 200  
 Middle East 122–175  
   Alexander the Great and his heirs 138–143, 179, 181  
   Ancient 121–169  
   Arab Spring 44–45  
   balancing act 172–175. *See also* Arab nations; Iran; Iraq; Israel  
   Crusades 79–80, 152–155, 163, 213  
   Cyrus the Great 131, 134, 139, 146  
   Darius the Great 135, 136  
   European involvement 171  
   gunpowder 160–161  
   Lands of the Prophet 148–151. *See also* Abbasid Caliphate; Islam; Umayyad Empire  
   Mesopotamian Crescent 124–129. *See also* Assyria; Babylon; Sumer  
   Mongol tide 156–159  
   Osman's Dream 162–167. *See also* Constantinople; Ottoman Empire  
   Promised Land 130–133. *See also* Babylon; Israel  
   Royal Road 137–138  
   West and East 144–147, 148, 152  
   World War I 170–171  
 Middle Kingdom (Africa) 15

Middle Kingdom (China) 200–209  
 Midway, Battle of 258, 259  
 Milosevic, Slobodan 120  
 Minamoto clan 222–223  
 Ming Dynasty 265, 266, 267, 273  
 Minoans 52–53  
 Mississippian culture 286  
 Mitanni Empire 128  
 Mithradates VI 144, 145  
 Modoc War 291  
 Mogul Empire 188–189, 190  
 Mohács, Battle of 164, 165  
 Mon 274  
 Mongol Empire  
   Battle of Ain Jalat 157  
   conflict with Novgorod Republic 213  
   conflict with Timur 158  
   dissolution 215  
   The Golden Horde 158, 186, 224  
   invasions by 187, 224, 247, 256, 264, 269, 271  
   Kingdom of Pagan, control of 269  
   range 224, 247  
   Sack of Baghdad 156  
 Montenegro 120  
 Muhammad (The Prophet) 148  
 Muscovite Kingdom 213, 214  
 Mussolini, Benito 37, 38, 111, 113. *See also* Italy, World War II  
 Myanmar 245, 269, 273, 278. *See also* Burma  
 Mysore 192, 275

## N

Nadir Khan (Nadir Shah) 167, 169  
 Nagashino, Battle of 227  
 Nam Viet 262, 263, 264. *See also* Vietnam  
 Nanda Dynasty 179  
 Nanking 230, 232, 240  
 Napoleon 98–99  
 Napoleonic Wars 98–99, 295, 298  
 Native American civilizations  
   Cherokee 289  
   Comanche 291  
   Creek Nation 295  
   culture groups 286  
   French-Indian War 281, 288  
   Great Sioux Nation 290  
   King Philip's War 287  
   Modoc War 291  
   Ojibwa 290  
   Pequot War 287  
   prehistoric 286  
   Red River War 291  
   Seminole Wars 288, 295  
   smallpox epidemic 287  
   Snake War 291  
   Trail of Tears 295  
   War of 1812 295  
 NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) 45, 120, 243, 309  
 Nebuchadnezzar 131, 134  
 Nepal 182, 205, 228, 229  
 Netherlands 34, 35, 91, 115, 258, 294. *See also* Dutch East Indies  
 Nevsky, Alexander 186, 213  
 New Orleans, Battle of 295  
 New Zealand 246, 255

Ngassaunggyan, Battle of 271  
 Ngo Dinh Diem 277  
 Ngo Quyen 263  
 Nicopolis, Battle of 80  
 Ninevah, Ancient 147  
 Nobunaga, Oda 225, 226, 227  
*Noche Triste* (night of sorrows) 283  
 Norse rule 212, 213. *See also* Viking Age  
 North Africa  
   Berbers and Arabs 24, 26, 78, 150  
   Carthage war 20, 21  
   Jugurthine War 22  
   Middle Ages, Almoravid and Almohad 25  
   protests of 2011 44  
   Vandals 23, 66  
   World War II 38–39  
 North America. *See also* Native American civilizations; specific countries  
   Mexican-American War 297, 302  
   prehistoric 286  
   Texas Revolution 301  
 Northern and Eastern Asia 198–243. *See also* Afghanistan; Korea; Tibet  
   Japan, Empire of 234–237. *See also* Japan  
   Land of Morning Calm 216–219  
   Land of the Rising Sun 222–227  
   Middle Kingdom 200–209. *See also* China  
   nuclear warfare 238–239, 276  
   Russia, birth of 212–215. *See also* Russian Empire; Siberia  
   Sarmatians 63  
   Soviets and Americans 240–243. *See also* Soviet Union  
   war of the gods 210–211  
   warships 219, 220–221  
   West and East 228–233

Noryang, Battle of 219  
 Novgorod Republic 212, 213  
 Nubian Kingdom of Kush 15, 16, 17  
 nuclear warfare 119, 196, 234, 236, 238–239, 276, 307  
 Numidia 20, 21, 22, 23

## O

Oftissus, Battle of 139  
 Okinawa, Battle of 236, 237  
 Olaf the Holy 74  
 Old Kingdom, Africa 14  
 Ollantaytambo 284  
 Olmec 282, 285  
 Olympian Empires 48–57  
 Onin War 225, 227  
 Operation Torch 39  
 opium production 309  
 Opium Wars 230  
 Osman 162  
 Ossetia 121  
 Ottoman Empire  
   and Crusaders 80, 159–163  
   invasions of Persia 165, 168  
   Ottoman-Habsburg Wars 90  
   Ottoman-Persian Wars 166–167  
   range 80, 92, 159, 160, 162, 163, 164  
   under Suleiman I 92, 164–165  
   wars with Russia 92, 93, 169  
   World War I 105, 170, 171  
 Ottoman-Habsburg Wars 90



118–119, 258, 276, 279  
Ghana Empire 25, 26, 41  
Goguryeo 216, 218  
Gojoseon 216  
The Golden Horde 158, 186, 224  
Gravelines, Battle of 89  
Great Britain. *See* Britain  
The Great Game 194, 242, 275  
Great Heathen Army 69  
Great Northern War 94  
Great Sioux Nation 290  
Great Wall of China 201, 202, 203  
Great Zimbabwe 32  
Greco-Bactrian Kingdom 184  
Greece  
    Ancient 20, 48–53, 61, 62, 138–142, 144  
    World War II 38, 113  
Greek-Persian Wars 49–51  
Guadalcanal, Battle of 258, 259  
Guam 258, 306  
Guatemala 282, 283  
Gu’edena 124  
Gulf War 175, 242  
Gupta Dynasty 182  
Gurkhas 228, 229

H

Habsburg Dynasty 90  
Hadrian’s Wall 57  
Haengju, Battle of 219  
Haitian Revolution 296  
Hammurabi, campaigns of 126  
Han Dynasty 203, 204, 216, 262  
Hannibal 20, 21, 180, 269  
Harold Godwinson of Wessex 75  
Hasmoneans 132  
Hastings, Battle of 75, 183  
Hawaii 254, 258  
Hellenic culture 132, 140, 142, 184, 185, 211  
Hephthalites 65  
Hinduism 182, 188, 190, 195, 246, 247  
Hitler, Adolf 112, 116. *See also* Germany, World War II  
Hittites 16, 128, 129  
Ho Chi Minh 276, 277  
Honduras 282, 283  
Hong, Xiuquan 230, 232  
Hong Kong 230, 257, 258  
Hoplites 48, 49  
Huang di (Yellow Emperor) 211  
Hülegü 156–157  
Hundred Years’ War 84, 160  
Hungary 90, 102–103, 105, 162, 164, 165, 186, 231  
Huns 65  
Hurrians 128  
Hussite Wars 81  
Hyphasis, march to the 139

I

Illyria 62  
Inca 284  
India  
    Afghanistan as base of attack on 242  
    Ancient 178–183, 184, 185, 211

British control of 170, 192, 193, 275  
Chola Dynasty 270  
First Indian Empire 179  
Gupta Dynasty 182  
Hephthalites 65  
independence from Britain 193  
India-Pakistan Wars 195–196  
Maratha Empire 190–191  
Mogul Empire 188–189  
Pala Empire 183  
Siege of Seringapatam 192  
    and Sri Lankan civil war 197  
    Timur control of 158–159  
India-Pakistan Wars 195–196  
Indochina 40, 258, 272, 276, 277, 279  
Indochina War of 1946, First 276  
Indo-Iranians (Aryans) 178, 180  
Indonesia 247, 251, 258  
Iran 144–145, 174, 187, 242  
Iran-Iraq War 174  
Iraq 126, 148, 174–175, 206, 207, 243. *See also* Baghdad  
Iraq War 175  
Ireland 72, 73, 109  
Iron Age 260, 261  
Islam  
    Afghanistan, Islamic State of 242  
    expansion 24, 30, 78, 148, 207  
    and the Mali Empire 27  
    Mogul Empire 188, 189  
    Muslims and the India-Pakistan border 195  
    Muslim sects 150, 154  
    Muslim world, 11th-13th century 154–155  
    Shia Iran, Islamic Revolution in 174  
    Shia Muslims 150, 164, 168, 174, 175  
    and the Songhai Empire 28  
    Sunni Muslims 44, 150, 165, 174  
    Thailand 279  
    wars of religion 78–80, 111. *See also* Crusades  
Islandwana, Battle of 34  
Ismail I 166, 168  
Israel 130, 131, 172–173  
Italo-Ethiopian Wars 36–37  
Italy. *See also* Roman Empire  
    Boxer Uprising in China 231  
    fascist, genocide during 111  
    invasion by Huns 65  
    Italo-Ethiopian Wars 36–37  
    Medieval warfare 82  
    World War I 38, 105  
    World War II 38, 112, 113, 115, 258  
Ivan the Terrible 214, 215  
Iwo Jima, Battle of 236

J

Jacobite Risings 96  
Jammu 195  
Japan  
    Battle of Nagashino 227  
    Boxer Uprising in China 231  
    invasion of Manchuria 258  
    invasions of China 234, 240, 250, 258  
    and Korea 219, 234, 235  
    Mongol invasion of 224  
    Onin War 225, 227  
    Russo-Japanese War 233

samurai 222  
Sengoku Period 225–226  
Siberian intervention by 235  
Sino-Japanese Wars 234  
use of gunpowder 161  
World War II 112, 234, 236–239, 250–251, 258, 276–277  
Java 246, 247–249, 250, 251  
Java Sea, Battle of the 251  
Java War (1740) 249  
Java Wars (1200s) 247  
Jayavarman II 270  
Jerusalem 130–133, 143, 153–155, 171–173  
Jewish revolts 133  
Jin Dynasty 204, 209, 224  
Jordan 172  
Judah (Judea) 131, 132, 144  
Jugurthine War 22

K

Kadesh, Battle of 16, 129  
Kamehameha I 254  
Karluks 207  
Kashmir 195  
Khmer, the Kingdom of 267, 270, 272  
Khwarazemia 187  
Kievan Rus, 9th to 13th centuries 212  
King Philip’s War 287  
King’s Mountain, Battle of 289  
knights 152, 155  
Knut the Great 71, 74  
Koguryo-China Wars 217  
Kongo, Kingdom of the 31  
Kongo-Angola war 31  
Königgrätz, Battle of 100  
Korea and the Korean Peninsula 216–221, 234, 235, 241  
Korean War 241  
Kosovo conflicts 80, 111, 120  
Kublai Khan 224, 247, 264, 271  
Kush, Nubian Kingdom of 15, 16, 17  
Kushan Empire 185  
Kuwait 44, 175

L

land bridge 281, 286  
Land of a Thousand Cities. *See* Bactria  
Laos 204, 267, 276  
Lawrence of Arabia 170  
League of Nations 37  
Lebanon 164, 172, 173  
legions, Roman 59  
Lelantine War 48  
Lenin 108  
Levant  
    and Alexander the Great 132, 138  
    and Ancient Egypt 15, 16, 129, 132  
    Ayyubid control of 157  
    and the Battle of Kadesh 129  
    conflict with Ptolemy and Seleucus 142, 143  
    Crusades 153, 157  
    invasion by Parthian 144  
    Ottoman control of 164  
    transition from Hellenic to Arabic 149  
Libya 14, 15, 16, 20, 38, 44



Little Bighorn, Battle of 290  
Livonian War 214  
The Lost City 282  
Lydia 134

M

Maccabees 132  
Macedonia (Macedon) 120, 138–143, 179  
Macedonian War, Second 62, 142  
Madagascar 246  
Maipú, Battle of 299, 300  
Malacca, Sultanate of 266, 267, 273  
Malaysian Peninsula 245, 268, 276  
Maldon, Battle of 71  
Mali Empire 27, 41  
Malta, Siege of 164  
Mamluks 155, 157, 162  
Manchu Dynasty 219  
Manchuria 219, 240, 258  
Manifest Destiny 302  
Manzikert, Battle of 152  
Maori 255  
Maratha Empire 190–191  
marathon (track event) 49  
Marathon, Battle of 49  
Marius, Gaius 59  
Marlborough, Duke of 95  
Matapa Empire 32  
Mataram Sultanate 248, 249  
Mauretania 23  
Mauryan Empire 142, 179, 182  
Maya 136, 281, 283  
Medang Kingdom 246  
Median Empire 134  
Medieval Age 82–87  
Mesoamerica 282–285  
Mesopotamia 124–126, 139, 147, 166, 170–171, 178, 180  
Mexican-American War 297, 302  
Mexico 281, 282, 283, 285, 297, 301, 302, 308  
Mi, Battle of 200  
Middle East 122–175  
    Alexander the Great and his heirs 138–143, 179, 181  
    Ancient 121–169  
    Arab Spring 44–45  
    balancing act 172–175. *See also* Arab nations; Iran; Iraq; Israel  
    Crusades 79–80, 152–155, 163, 213  
    Cyrus the Great 131, 134, 139, 146  
    Darius the Great 135, 136  
    European involvement 171  
    gunpowder 160–161  
    Lands of the Prophet 148–151. *See also* Abbasid Caliphate; Islam; Umayyad Empire  
    Mesopotamian Crescent 124–129. *See also* Assyria; Babylon; Sumer  
    Mongol tide 156–159  
    Osman’s Dream 162–167. *See also* Constantinople; Ottoman Empire  
    Promised Land 130–133. *See also* Babylon; Israel  
    Royal Road 137–138  
    West and East 144–147, 148, 152  
    World War I 170–171  
Middle Kingdom (Africa) 15  
Middle Kingdom (China) 200–209

Midway, Battle of 258, 259  
Milosevic, Slobodan 120  
Minamoto clan 222–223  
Ming Dynasty 265, 266, 267, 273  
Minoans 52–53  
Mississippian culture 286  
Mitanni Empire 128  
Mithradates VI 144, 145  
Modoc War 291  
Mogul Empire 188–189, 190  
Mohács, Battle of 164, 165  
Mon 274  
Mongol Empire  
    Battle of Ain Jalat 157  
    conflict with Novgorod Republic 213  
    conflict with Timur 158  
    dissolution 215  
    The Golden Horde 158, 186, 224  
    invasions by 187, 224, 247, 256, 264, 269, 271  
    Kingdom of Pagan, control of 269  
    range 224, 247  
    Sack of Baghdad 156  
Montenegro 120  
Muhammad (The Prophet) 148  
Muscovite Kingdom 213, 214  
Mussolini, Benito 37, 38, 111, 113. *See also* Italy, World War II  
Myanmar 245, 269, 273, 278. *See also* Burma  
Mysore 192, 275

N

Nadir Khan (Nadir Shah) 167, 169  
Nagashino, Battle of 227  
Nam Viet 262, 263, 264. *See also* Vietnam  
Nanda Dynasty 179  
Nanking 230, 232, 240  
Napoleon 98–99  
Napoleonic Wars 98–99, 295, 298  
Native American civilizations  
    Cherokee 289  
    Comanche 291  
    Creek Nation 295  
    culture groups 286  
    French-Indian War 281, 288  
    Great Sioux Nation 290  
    King Philip’s War 287  
    Modoc War 291  
    Ojibwa 290  
    Pequot War 287  
    prehistoric 286  
    Red River War 291  
    Seminole Wars 288, 295  
    smallpox epidemic 287  
    Snake War 291  
    Trail of Tears 295  
    War of 1812 295  
NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) 45, 120, 243, 309  
Nebuchadnezzar 131, 134  
Nepal 182, 205, 228, 229  
Netherlands 34, 35, 91, 115, 258, 294. *See also* Dutch East Indies  
Nevsky, Alexander 186, 213  
New Orleans, Battle of 295  
New Zealand 246, 255  
Ngassaunggyan, Battle of 271

Ngo Dinh Diem 277  
Ngo Quyen 263  
Nicopolis, Battle of 80  
Ninevah, Ancient 147  
Nobunaga, Oda 225, 226, 227  
*Noche Triste* (night of sorrows) 283  
Norse rule 212, 213. *See also* Viking Age  
North Africa  
    Berbers and Arabs 24, 26, 78, 150  
    Carthage war 20, 21  
    Jugurthine War 22  
    Middle Ages, Almoravid and Almohad 25  
    protests of 2011 44  
    Vandals 23, 66  
    World War II 38–39  
North America. *See also* Native American civilizations; specific countries  
    Mexican-American War 297, 302  
    prehistoric 286  
    Texas Revolution 301  
Northern and Eastern Asia 198–243. *See also* Afghanistan; Korea; Tibet  
    Japan, Empire of 234–237. *See also* Japan  
    Land of Morning Calm 216–219  
    Land of the Rising Sun 222–227  
    Middle Kingdom 200–209. *See also* China  
    nuclear warfare 238–239, 276  
    Russia, birth of 212–215. *See also* Russian Empire; Siberia  
    Sarmatians 63  
    Soviets and Americans 240–243. *See also* Soviet Union  
    war of the gods 210–211  
    warships 219, 220–221  
    West and East 228–233  
Noryang, Battle of 219  
Novgorod Republic 212, 213  
Nubian Kingdom of Kush 15, 16, 17  
nuclear warfare 119, 196, 234, 236, 238–239, 276, 307  
Numidia 20, 21, 22, 23

O

Oftissus, Battle of 139  
Okinawa, Battle of 236, 237  
Olaf the Holy 74  
Old Kingdom, Africa 14  
Ollantaytambo 284  
Olmec 282, 285  
Olympian Empires 48–57  
Onin War 225, 227  
Operation Torch 39  
opium production 309  
Opium Wars 230  
Osman 162  
Ossetia 121  
Ottoman Empire  
    and Crusaders 80, 159–163  
    invasions of Persia 165, 168  
    Ottoman-Habsburg Wars 90  
    Ottoman-Persian Wars 166–167  
    range 80, 92, 159, 160, 162, 163, 164  
    under Suleiman I 92, 164–165  
    wars with Russia 92, 93, 169  
    World War I 105, 170, 171  
Ottoman-Habsburg Wars 90



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